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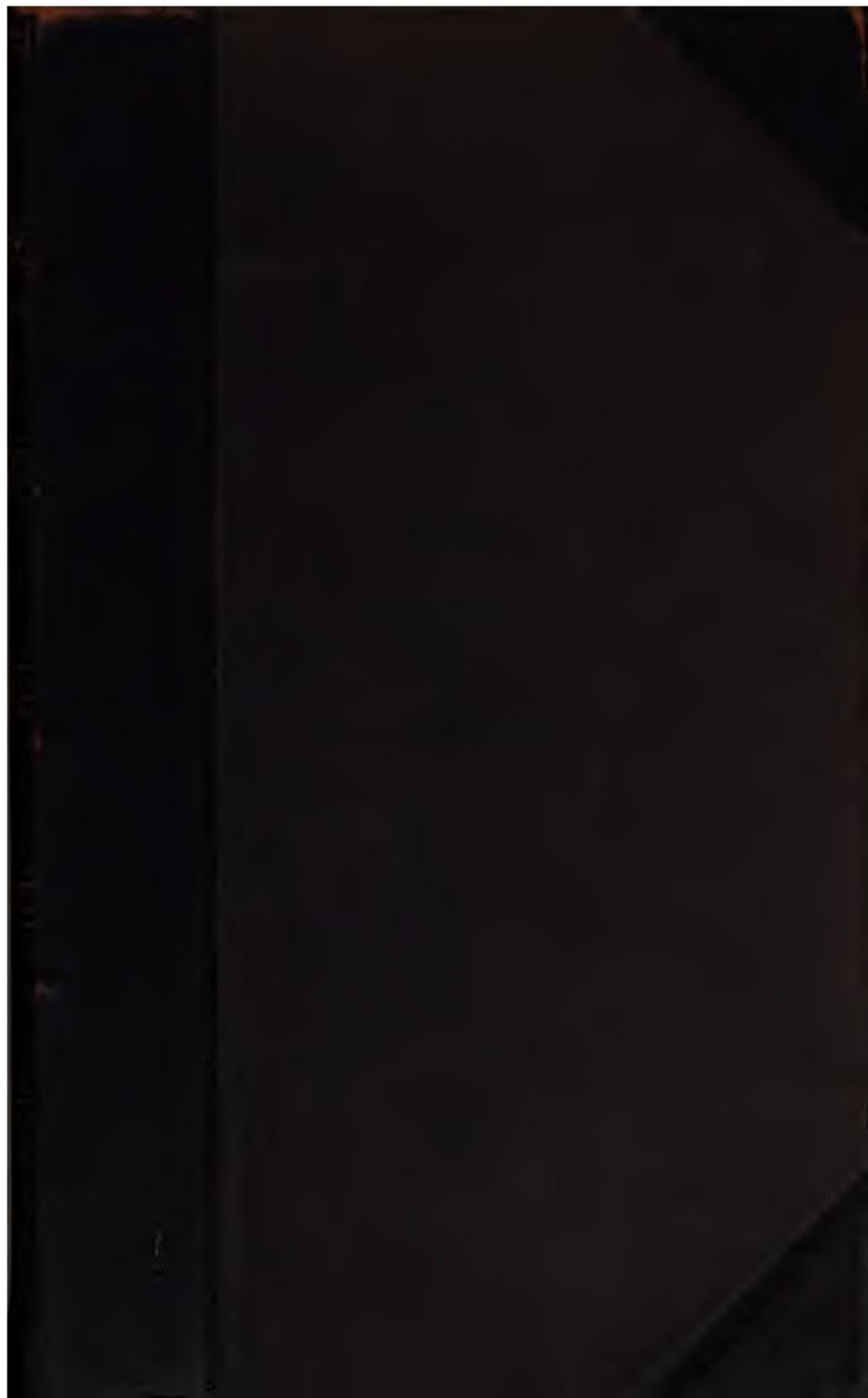
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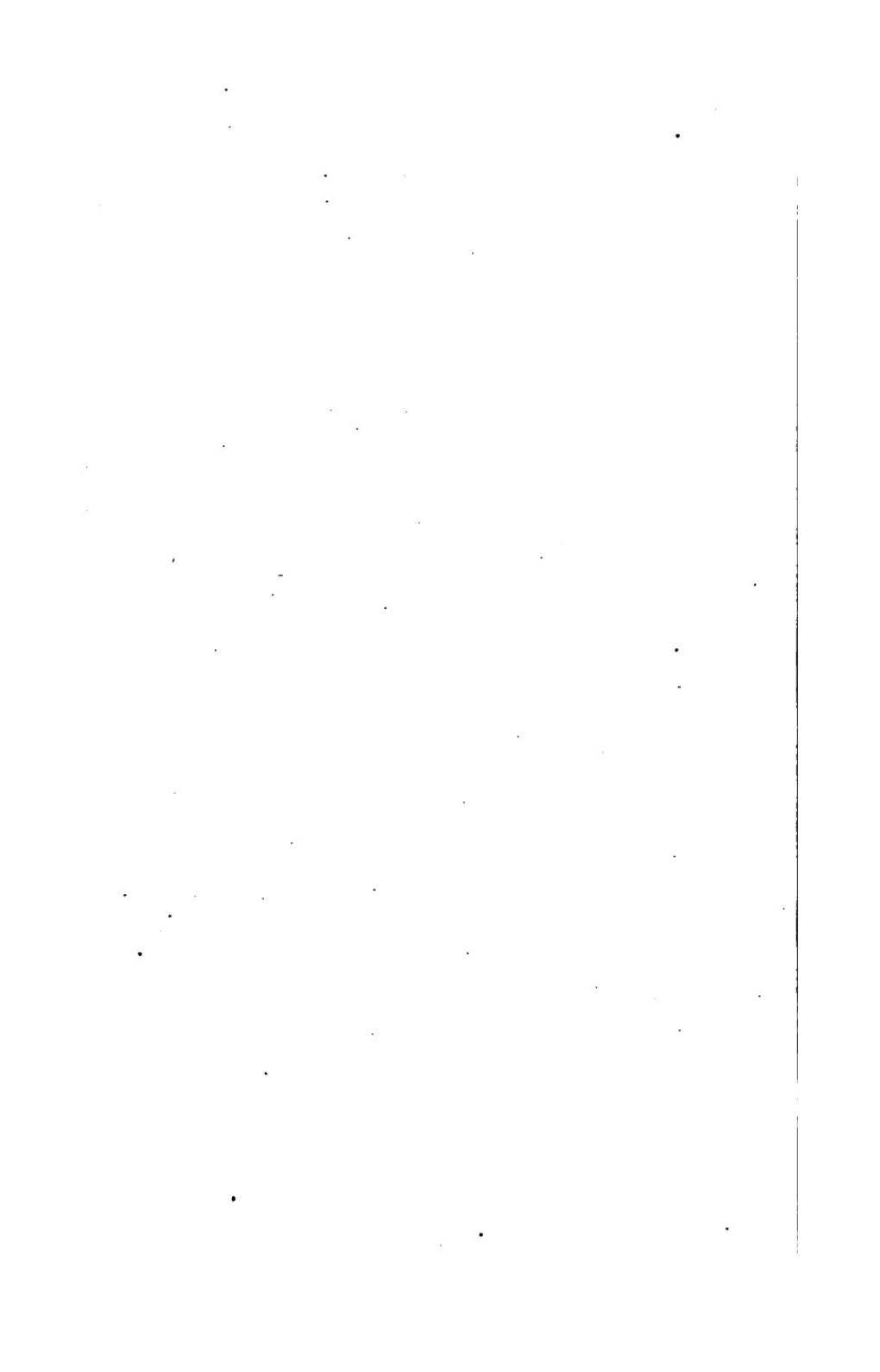
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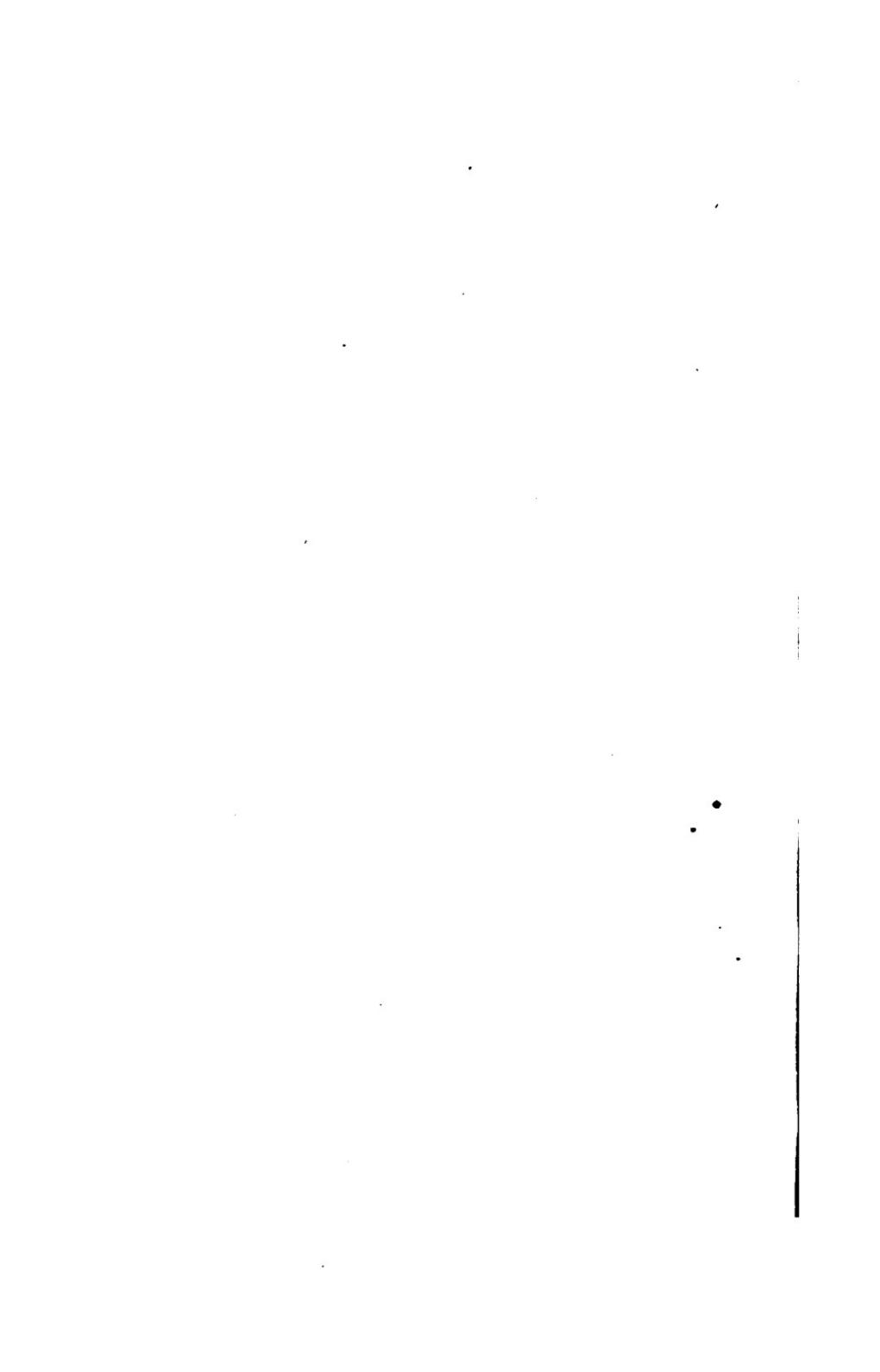
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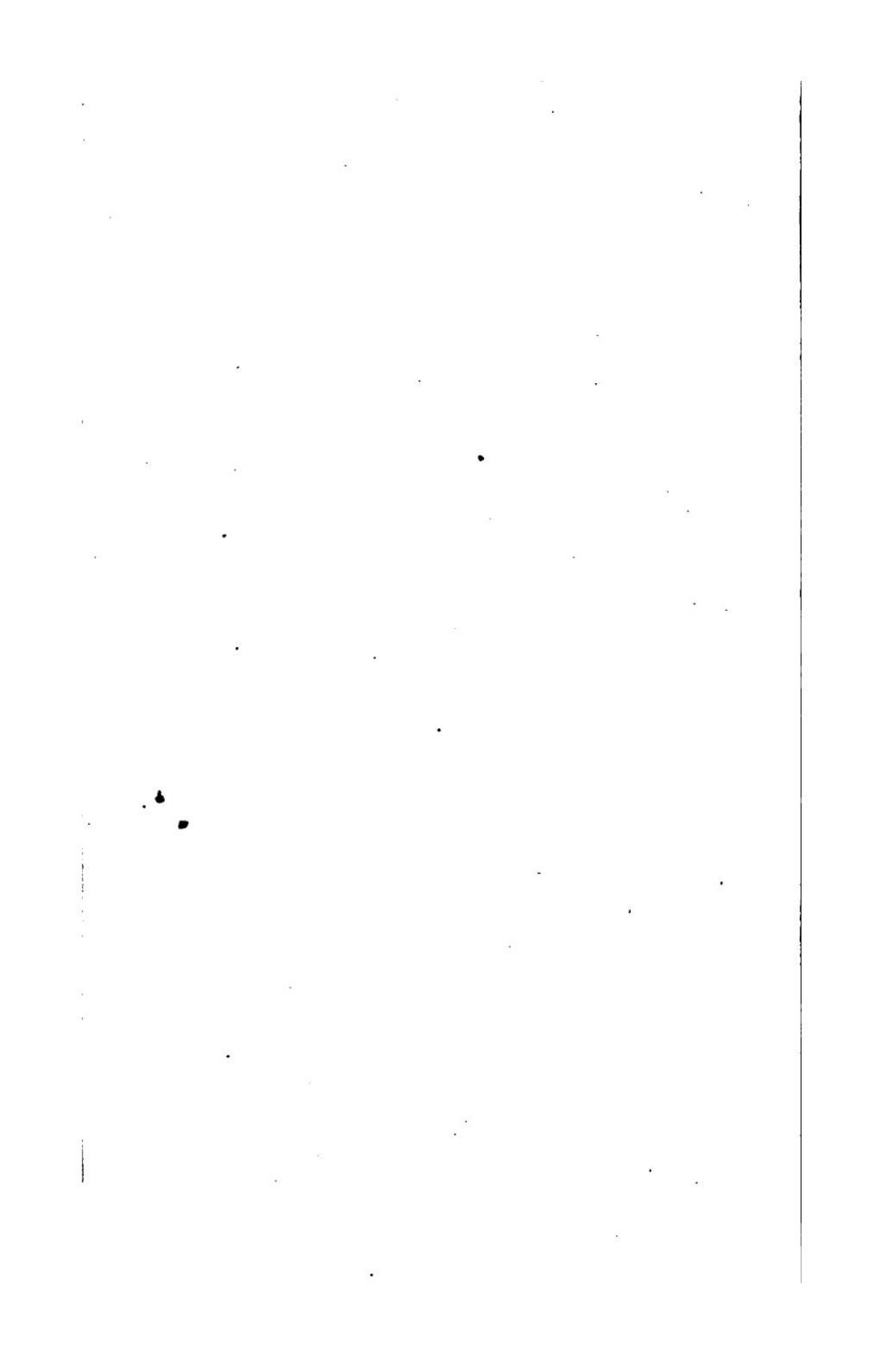












INVISIBLE REALITIES

THE

CHRISTIAN'S GREAT CONCERN;

To which is added

THE

BOOKS OPENED;

IN GENERAL

DISCOURSES;

WITH

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

BY

HENRY ENDLEBURY, A. M.



Whosoever looketh not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor. iv. 18.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the Books were opened: and another Book was opened; which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their works.

Rev. xx. 12.

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A MEMOIR

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LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

MR. HENRY PENDLEBURY, the reverend Author of the following Discourses, was born at Jockin in the parish of Bury, in Lancashire, May 6th, 1626. In his childhood he showed an aversion to those trifles and vanities, which are usually so amusing to children, and manifested a reserved, serious disposition. It was soon discovered he possessed a love of learning, which he gratified by a close and diligent attention to his studies. His friends perceiving which way his inclination led him, and observing tokens of early piety in his conduct,

resolved to give him an education suitable to the ministry. Having been taught the rudiments of learning at private schools in the neighbourhood, he was afterwards removed to the Grammar School at BURY, and then sent to Christ's College, Cambridge. When he had taken his degrees he returned home, and preached his first sermon, August 16th, 1648, at Ashworth chapel, not far from his native place, where he continued some time as a probationer in the ministry. Having passed through his preparatory exercises, with great credit to himself and satisfaction to the examiners, he was set apart to the sacred office, with Mr. James Livsey, at Turton chapel, near Bolton, October 3rd, 1650. The reverend ministers who assisted on the occasion, were John Tilsley, Dean church; Thomas Pitts; Jonathan Scholfield, Heywood chapel; Tobias Furness, Bury; and Robert Bath, Rochdale. He was observed to make his ordination vows with great humility and seriousness.

The first place at which he officiated after his ordination, was Horridge chapel, in Dean parish, where he continued about twelve months. He then removed to Holcome chapel, in the parish of Bury, October 16th, 1651;

Life of the Author.

v

where he continued to exercise his ministry, very profitably to the souls of his hearers, till the fatal Bartholomew day, 1662, when he chose to sacrifice outward ease rather than peace of conscience.

Before his ejectment from Holcombe he preached to other congregations far and near, besides his regular work on the Lord's day at home; so that his worth was known, and his labours were coveted. The people at Ringley gave him a call, but those at Holcombe were not willing to part with him, and he loved them too well to leave them without a sufficient cause. He was ever mindful of his ordination vows, and could not persuade himself to believe, that any human power could revoke the commission to preach the gospel, which ministers receive from Christ, the only lawful governor of his church: his labours, therefore, were as abundant after the act of uniformity as before, according to his opportunity. The dissenters in the neighbouring parishes were very desirous of his ministry amongst them, and he was equally willing to spend and be spent for the benefit of the souls of men, which were perishing by the famine of God's Word.

When banished from home by the five mile

act, he found an hospitable retreat in the house of Mr. Tong, near Bolton, the father of the Rev. William Tong who wrote the life of Matthew Henry. As soon as the ruling powers of the day, consented to his exercising the natural and unalienable right of man without molestation, Mr. P. did not forsake his beloved friends at Holcome; but publicly administered God's ordinances to them, in that way his judgment and conscience approved. A temporary place was now built in Bass-lane, in which he continued to exercise his ministry as long as he lived.* The people here enjoyed the benefit of his labours, either publicly or privately, about 44 years.

He welcomed his last sickness with deep submission to the will of God. He was willing to live if his Lord and master, whom he served with his spirit in the gospel, had any more work for him to perform in the church below; but if not, he was willing to depart, anxious to partake of the blessedness of the saints above, and to be with Christ. He had

* In the days of his successor, a chapel was built on the other side of the brook, called Dundee chapel, not far from the Episcopal place of worship whence Mr. P. was ejected.

but little pain in the beginning of his sickness, and was much employed in blessing God for dealing so gently with him; and carrying on his long visitation with so much ease to him. He continued in this resigned state, and said : “ I have had more time to work for my own soul, and the souls of others than I made account of when I was young ; and so, if God has no more work for me to do, I am free to go to my rest : I have had enough of living, and am filled and satisfied with this life upon earth.”

Several friends from all places where he had preached came to visit him, to whom he always dropped some word of suitable counsel. He advised those, who told him they were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his ministry, to give God the glory, and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. Those, who were profited by his labours and built up in grace, he exhorted to go on their way rejoicing, though they should see his face no more. Rich and trading professors, he warned to take heed that they lost not their souls in the crowd and hurry of earthly business, and charged them to remember the saying of Sir Thomas Moore, which contains a great deal of truth : “ There is a

devil termed business; that carrieth more souls with him to hell, than all the devils beside." He continued to address them, saying: "O beware of this devil: when you come to be in my condition, your full bags, your full shops, and full houses, will stand you in no stead." Some of his brethren in the ministry visited him, with whom he freely conversed, and whom he always desired to pray with him, as he did all his other christian friends. Among the rest, Mr. Oliver Heywood called upon him, about a month before his death, when the following interesting conversation took place, which, as it contains the dying sentiments of this man of God, is here inserted.

"*What are your thoughts,*" said Mr. H. "*as to justification by Christ's righteousness?*"

Mr. P. replied, "I look only to be justified by Christ's righteousness received by faith."

"*What evidence have you for heaven?*"

"I had good grounds of hope," said he, "many years ago, concerning my state of grace: though I am full of defects, yet the merits of Christ are all-sufficient, on which I trust."

"*Are you satisfied that you have delivered in your sermons, nothing but such gospel truths as you can own at the tribunal of Christ?*"

"Excepting human frailty, so far as I can remember, I have never delivered any thing to my hearers but what I dare die with, and go with to judgment."

"*Have you any comfortable seals to your ministry?*"

"I bless God I have, and have had more fruits appear since my lying down, than I knew of before, especially many young persons have appeared hopeful."

"*What are your thoughts now, as to your nonconformity? Do you repent of it?*"

"I bless God I am abundantly satisfied with it; and if I were to make my choice over again, and if it were possible for me to see all the sufferings I have undergone for it, (which are nothing to what many of the precious servants of God have suffered,) and if they were all laid together, I would make the same choice, and take my nonconformity with them; and I bless God I never so much as tampered with them."

"*What legacies have you to leave?*"

"I am unfit to give counsel to you my brother, but the words of the apostle I leave with you: "Be not weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

In the latter part of his sickness, it pleased his heavenly Father to visit him with a complication of disorders; under all the tortures of which he glorified God with great patience, and expressed his hope of future blessedness, saying: "I am not sick unto death, but unto eternal life." He would often say: "In a little while all will be well." As to the state of his mind, he thus expressed himself to some friends: "I can now look back upon my way and work in the ministry, and say, I have been faithful; and I can look within and say I have peace: but after all, the bottom I would fix on is Christ and his righteousness, I would make him all in all." When he was brought exceedingly low, he would sometimes be left alone in the day, that he might with less distraction enjoy communion with God in secret prayer and meditation. Some little before he died, a few of his hearers coming to him, and inquiring how he was, he said, "I long after your spiritual and soul welfare."

He departed this life June 18th, 1695, about eight o'clock in the morning, in the seventieth year of his age. His pious soul, which through the whole course of his life, had been bent towards God, showed its rea-

diness for the ful and eternal fruition, by its sweet and ardent breathings after him the night and morning before its departure, and which were often expressed in these words : "Father, come, and take me home to thyself." His mortal remains were deposited in Bury church-yard, being the parish in which he lived, near the chancel wall on the south side, June 20th, 1695. A great multitude of people attended his funeral, who made great lamentation over him ; and the Rev. Robert Seddon of Bolton preached the funeral sermon, at Mr. Pendlebury's chapel, from Daniel xii. 13. "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

The following is a brief account of the character of this servant of the Lord. If we wish to see what a man really is; we must follow him into the walks of private life, there he generally appears without disguise. So far as can be ascertained, the private conduct of Mr. Pendlebury, was a credit to his public profession as a christian and a minister. He had a transcript of those divine truths and graces upon his own heart, which he made known to others. The tenor of his whole conduct, whether private or public, was directed by him to

the saving of himself, his family, and his flock. His private conversation was such as proved him to be fully persuaded in his heart, that there was more than ordinary care required of him, to "keep himself unspotted from the world," and in every respect to be preserved "pure from the blood of all men." Indeed, he was in private what he professed to be in public : he preached as he believed, and lived as he preached; so that his life was a comment on his doctrine. By such conduct he recommended religion to others, enjoyed the comfort of it himself, and stopped the mouth of gainsayers. Much of his time was spent in the closet, where he gave himself to reading, meditation, and prayer : this was the only place on earth, next to the pulpit, in which he took most delight. His thoughts were very little occupied with the things of this world, the management of which he left mostly, if not entirely, to his active and virtuous partner. In the neighbourhood in which he was born, and where he spent his days, there is a traditional account concerning his indifference to secular concerne, which informs us, that though he had a small farm, he was so much taken up with his studies, he did not know what number

of cattle he possessed. It was well for him he had a wife capable and willing to pay that attention to the family concerns they required.

Contempt of the world was a conspicuous trait in the character of Mr. P. He was content to move in an obscure sphere, so that he might be an instrument of doing good to precious souls, and be favoured with much of his Master's presence. He sought not great things nor great places for himself, and when they were offered he declined them, having learned with the apostle Paul to say : "In whatsoever state I am, therewith I am content." He was a great redeemer of time, there was not so much as a day spent by him in idleness. The sense of unseen things which he endeavoured to impress on the minds of others, was so powerfully felt on his own, that it made him fill every leaf in the book of his life with some great and weighty duties.

As a minister he was richly furnished with natural and acquired endowments, qualifying him for that high and honourable work to which his Lord had called him. An excellent spirit was found in him ; he was a scribe well instructed in the things of the kingdom of heaven, and brought forth out of the treasury

things new and old: indeed he was an interpreter, one of a thousand, a workman that need not to be ashamed, unto whom a place was due among the first rank of worthies. He was able to maintain the truths of the gospel against opposers and subverters. The controversies of the day in which he lived were well understood by him, and he had read over most of the ancient fathers with considerable profit. His finished pieces prove he was master, not only of the subjects he took in hand, but of language to express himself with propriety. Though his knowledge was great, he did not employ it to amuse the learned or astonish the ignorant; but made it subservient to the best of purposes,—the welfare of souls. His sermons were remarkably plain, and he accommodated himself to the capacities of his hearers, by the use of words and phrases peculiar to that dark corner in which he dwelt.

He had not a ready utterance in his delivery of sermons, but that which was wanting in words was made up in weight. His preaching was powerful, searching, and fruitful; and was well adapted to feed and refresh the souls of those who were acquainted with experimental religion: A person who frequently enjoyed

the benefit of his ministry declared, "that some good effect ever attended his preaching; and that by a special direction, divine blessing, and art not to be imitated by others, he always found an easy access into the bosoms of his auditory. Yea, I am fully persuaded, myself having been so often an eye-witness, that he never preached a sermon but what did plentifully warm the hearts, and moisten the faces of those that heard him." The doctrine of his sermons was solid and scriptural, such as naturally arose from the text, and was well established by proofs from the word of God. He was not afraid of having his discourses overloaded with scriptural expressions, but frequently employed the "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

His industry was a conspicuous part of his character. The large measure of gifts he possessed, furnished him with a readiness for all ministerial performances, but did not render him the less studious: he was resolved not to serve the Lord with that which cost him nothing. All his sermons both as to the heads and amplifications, were premeditated and written, and afterwards preached with very little alteration without the use of his notes.

This method manifested, beside the strength of his memory, the great pains he took to fix his discourses on his mind, especially considering the variety of matter and number of texts they contained. He did not always confine himself to what he had previously written, but sometimes made use of those ideas which presented themselves at the moment of delivery. As a proof of his industry, once in his sickness, when there were some small hopes of recovery, he began to study a new discourse suitable to his own and his hearers' condition. His active spirit could not be confined within the limits of his own congregation, but neighbouring places were benefited by his ministry. He regularly preached twice on the Lord's day at home, and administered the Lord's supper every month. He united with Messrs. Newcome, of Manchester; Baldwin, of Eccles; and Walker, of Newton-heath, in preaching the weekly lecture at Bolton, established by Mr. Nathaniel Hilton, of London. He was ever ready to engage in any good work and labour of love.

Beside preaching, he wrote several treatises, some of which were published in his life-

time, and some after his death. The following is a list.

A Treatise on Transubstantiation. Published at the request of Archbishop Tillotson.

Another on the Sacrifice of the Mass. Re-printed a few years since.

The Barren Fig-tree. A practical Exposition of the parable in Luke XIII. 6—9.

Invisible Realities. A discourse on 2 Cor. IV. 18.

The Books Opened. A discourse on Rev. XX. 12.

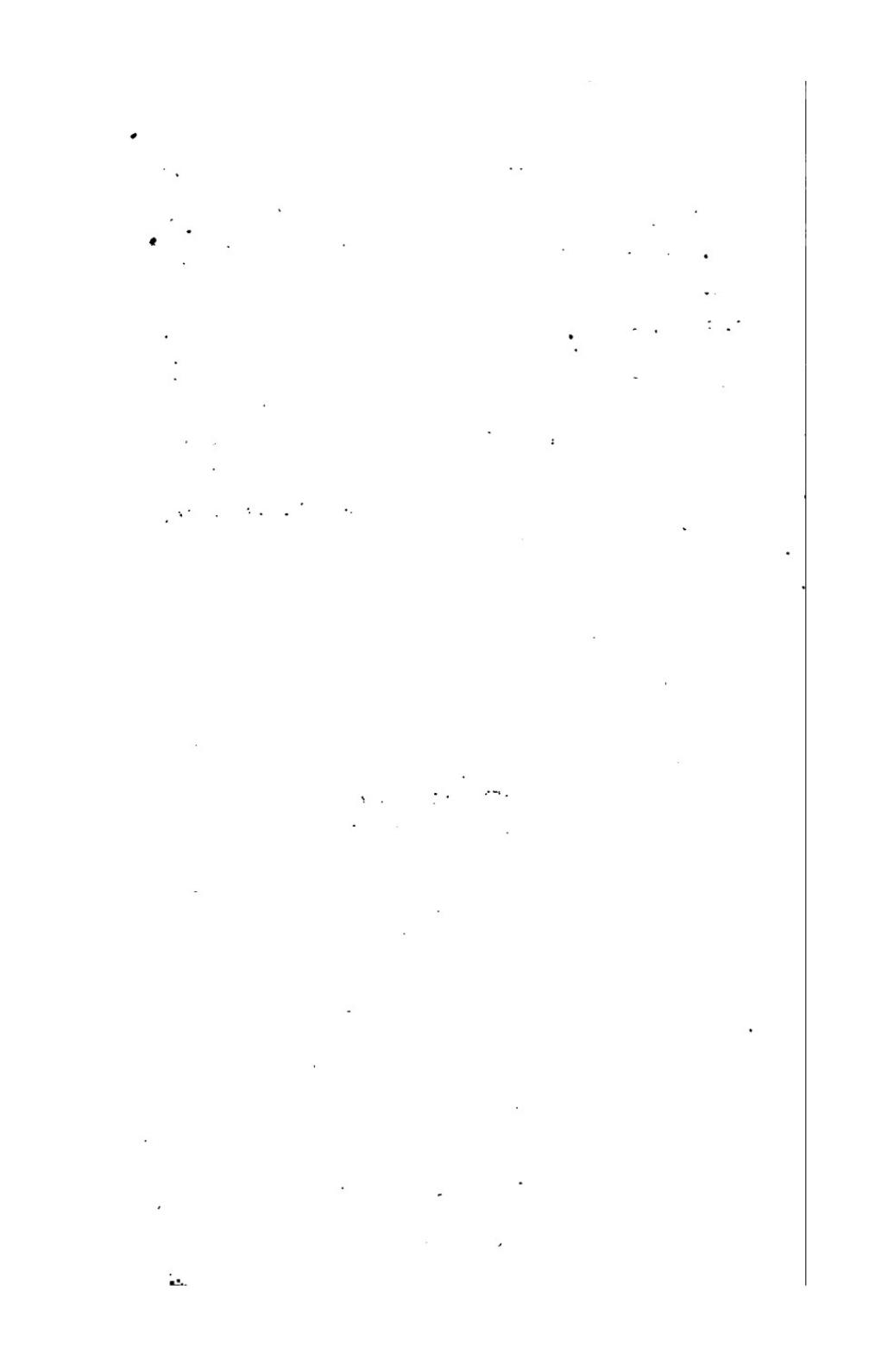
The three last were published after his death. Two Sermons of his on the Ascension of Christ, from John xiv. 2. "I go to prepare a place for you;" and one from Psalm xcvi. 11. "Light is sown for the righteous; and gladness for the upright in heart;" with a life of Mr. Pendlebury were lately published by Mr. Slate of Stand, near Bury, who observes that several sermons of Mr. P—'s on the Transfiguration of Christ, preached at the Bolton lecture, were abroad in *Manuscript*, which many wished to be printed. The first edition of Invisible Realities contains an account of the life of Mr. Pendlebury drawn up by Mr. Chorlton, of Manchester. With the kind consent of Mr. Slate this Memoir has been taken from that published by him.

The labours of this excellent man were not without their reward. The God whom he loved and served, did not suffer him to labour in the dark; but gave him many pleasing testimonies of usefulness, and at seasons when such information was doubly sweet. The following account is a remarkable instance of this nature. When banished by the Oxford Act, at the first house he lodged (as a poor exile from his own house) he was saluted as a spiritual father; the person told him he was the instrument of his conversion by preaching a lecture at Leigh church. When in his last sickness, several persons came and acknowledged his ministry had been useful to their souls.

His attainments and usefulness in his master's work, were accompanied with deep humility: he knew he had nothing but what he had received, and that his success depended on the blessing of God upon his labours. His modesty was such, that though he was one of the tallest of his brethren for ministerial attainments and performances, yet he did really esteem himself the least of them, though they were very conspicuous to others. When persons who had been converted by

his ministry, informed him of it, he would frequently lift up his eyes and hands towards heaven and say: "Lord who am I, that I should be so honoured as to be instrumental in the conversion of one soul!" Thus on earth he appeared as a "burning and shining light," and, having turned many to righteousness, he shines as "the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."





INVISIBLE REALITIES.

SERMON I.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

THE blessed Apostle having described the great sufferings and grievous persecutions which the *Corinthians* had endured, and were enduring for the gospel's sake, in the eighth and three following verses of this chapter, proceeds to annex the grounds of their patience, confidence, constancy, and consolation, in all the pressures they went under. And these may be reduced to two heads; two things bore them up, and bore them out under all.

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1. A certain hope and expectation of a glorious resurrection to everlasting life, after all the ignominious sufferings of this life : ver. 13, 14. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken ; we also believe, and therefore speak ; knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." As if he had said, this is our corroboration and our consolation, the assurance that we have of a happy resurrection ; by this we are kept from sinking under discouragements, while "we are alway delivered unto death." ver. 11.

The 15th verse contains a reason of his confidence, of being the companion of the believing ~~Corinthians~~, after his many sufferings, for as much as they were endured for their good, and the glory of God : "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God."

This is the first ground of the apostle's constancy and comfort, ver. 16. "For which cause we faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day ;" i. e. upon the confident hope of eternal life we faint not, "knowing this, that he which hath raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also, &c."

2. The persuasion and assurance they were settled in, that they should not be losers, by the

sufferings and afflictions which they were enduring; but that they should all tend and turn, 1. To their present good; 2 To their future glory.

1. To their present good. "Though our outward man perish," that is, we faint not for this cause, as knowing that while our bodies, with all those things that tend to the maintaining and adorning of this present life, as health, and wealth, and credit, fall into decay and moulder away, by the various tribulations we are crushed under; yet our inward man, to wit, our souls or our spiritual estate, is renewed, is made new again day by day, is daily restored more and more to its primitive form and beauty. So that we are not losers, but gainers by our sufferings; if we lose our externals, lose our health, and lose our strength, and lose our peace, and lose our liberty, and lose our livelihood, yet all this loss is not without a compensation, we have it made up, we have it recompensed with internals, and things of eternal concernment: our outward losses are recompensed with inward gain, the decay of our temporal good compensated with the augmentation of spiritual grace; while the things of earth are going from us, the things of heaven come into their room.

2. To their future glory; as they were tending to their present good, so they turned to their future glory: ver. 17. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and

eternal weight of glory." Here the apostle shows,

1. What their afflictions were now ; 1 They were light ; 2. short.

2. What they wrought. Now these light and short afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us, 1. glory ; 2. a weight of glory ; 3. an exceeding weight of glory ; 4. a far more exceeding weight of glory ; 5. a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So that there is a three-fold most excellent antithesis. I say,

1. For affliction here is glory ; future glory for present affliction.

2. For light affliction, here is a weight of glory ; not only so, but an exceeding weight, a far more exceeding weight of glory. Weigh afflictions, the weightiest afflictions, all the afflictions of a christian with glory, and there will be no proportion betwixt them ; Rom. viii. 18. "For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

3. For short afflictions, afflictions for a moment, here is eternal glory, an eternal weight of glory. This is the other ground of their patience, confidence and consolation : And now upon this the words I have read come in, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen, are eternal."

In the whole verse you may take notice of two things.

1. How they came to make this judgment of their afflictions, to reckon of them as light and short ; This was by looking ; our affliction, is light, while we look at things not seen.

2. Why this looking made them thus to account, this was the vast difference which they hereby discovered to be between the present affliction, and future glory : "For the things which are seen, are temporal ; but the things which are not seen, are eternal;" that is, our present afflictions and sufferings, which are seen things, are temporal, for a short time, of short continuance ; but our future glory and happiness, which are unseen things, are endless and eternal.

The words may be considered, either, 1. Relatively, as they refer and have relation to the context ; and so they carry in them an account of the way and means whereby they came to this stability under their afflictions, viz. by eyeing unseen things. Or,

2. Absolutely in themselves, and so they carry in them an account of their carriage and practice ; or show what it was they made their great business in the world, viz. to eye and mind eternal unseen things. I shall look on them at this time under the latter consideration ; and so you have in them,

1. An act expressed, we look, looking.

2. The object described : and this is done,

1. Negatively ; we look not at things seen, the matters of this present life.

2. Affirmatively ; we look at things unseen,

at the things of another world, and within the veil ; these are our object, scope, and aim, to these we look. But how could they look at things not seen ? By the eye of faith they might look at them.

There are several things very observable in the words ; I shall only at this time observe this from them.

DOCTRINE. It is the great part and duty of christians in this life, to look at things which are not seen ; or, it is the great concern of christians to be looking at unseen things.

In this we shall,

First prove, that there are *unseen* things; things which are not seen, which are not visible, don't appear to eyes of flesh.

And this will be evident from these five or six things :

I. From *general assertions in Scripture*, that hold out to us a being of things which are not seen, do not appear ; see for this Heb. xi. 1. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Faith is an infallible argument, a clear conviction, a convincing demonstration of their existence, reality, and certainty, that they are no figments and fancies, but realities. So then you see hence, that there are unseen things; things which through faith we see with our minds as if they were present.

Again, Rom. viii. 24. "We are saved by hope : but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ?"

As the antecedent and consequent words show, it is as if the apostle had said, we have a certain apprehension of redemption, glory and final freedom from all calamities here, in hope and expectation, not in present possession ; "for hope that is seen, is not hope ;" i. e. if we had them in hand, we could not be said to hope for them : So that here again you see there are unseen things, the things of hope ; the things that hope waits for are unseen ; ver. 25. "We hope for that we see not." Hence believers are said to have their hope "laid up for them in heaven." Col. i. 5. "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven ;" the substance of which things is faith. Heb. xi. 1.

Again, Isa. lxiv. 4. "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

Mark, i. 1. Here are things prepared. 2. These prepared things are unknown things; ear hath not heard them, eye hath not seen them. 3. They have been unknown things from the beginning.

The ear of man hath heard of many things, and the eye of man hath seen many things up and down the world, in those many ages that the world hath stood ; yet behind all these things, that so many thousands and millions of ears, now stopped in the grave, have heard, and so many eyes, now sunk down in their holes, have seen ; I say, behind all these there

are things that ear hath never heard; that eye hath never seen; that time, which uncovers many things, has not uncovered, in its manifold revolutions, since the beginning. Does it not then appear that there are unseen things.

II. From the particular enumeration which we have in the scripture, of things which have not been seen or are unseen.

The Holy Ghost mentions many things in particular that are "not seen," do not appear. As, in a word, only to instance in a few things.

1. The Holy Ghost makes report to us of a life of saints that is hid; Col. iii. 3. "Your life is hid with Christ in God;" not only the life of grace, but especially the perfection of that life, the life of glory, this is hid.

Hiding implies two things; 1. Safety,—that the thing is in safety; so is this life, for it is hid with Christ in God. 2. Secrecy; that the thing hid is covered and out of sight; such is the life of glory, it is a hidden life, the glory of it is covered, and out of the sight of all mortals.

2. We read of the manifestation of sons; Rom. viii. 19. "For the earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And also to the same purpose, in 1 John iii. 2. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." In both these places we have a discovery that is to be made of the sons of God. Behold all that is yet manifest, or doth yet appear, there is a manifestation of the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we

shall be. O sirs, the sons of God shall be manifested with, and appear in much glory; much internal glory in their souls and bodies, much external glory in their privileges and possessions, that is not yet manifest, neither doth yet appear.

3. Glory to be revealed; Rom. viii. 18. 1 Pet. v. 1. "And also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed." Here is a glory to be revealed, to be opened and uncovered, that is yet covered and unseen; a glory to be thus revealed in us, or among us, us who are now suffering among men.

4. Wrath to come on sinners; 1 Thes. i. 10. Mat. iii. 7. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Wrath to come in another world, and in an eternal estate, besides and behind all that comes, and is seen in this world and present time.

5. Second death, that poor creatures, dead in trespasses and sins, have to pass under, when through the door of the first death. Rev. ii. 11. "He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death." Rev. xx. 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on him the second death shall have no power." There is then you see such a thing as a second death. O think on it, poor sinners, it is an unseen thing, but an unquestionable thing; there is such a thing certainly, and it is a dreadful thing: the first death is nothing, the breadth of it is but a step,

the length of it is but a moment of time, or two ; but the second death is something, there are the chambers of death, where you shall be led from one misery to another, and where you shall dwell for ever.

III. The being of unseen things is manifest from the *special distribution*, or *distinction*, that the scripture makes of things, into two ranks or sorts. This is another thing that will yet put this truth out of question. We find the Holy Ghost distributing things,

1. Into things present and to come ; Rom. viii. 38. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, &c." 1 Cor. iii. 22. there again you read of "things present and things to come."

2. Into those of this life, and of the life to come ; 1 Tim. iv. 8. "Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

3. Into things of this world, and that to come ; Luke xx. 34, 35. "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage ; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, &c." Eph. i. 21. "Every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come."

4. Into things above, and things on earth ; Col. iii. 2. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

5. Things in heaven and in earth; Col. i. 16.

"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth."

6. Things temporal and things eternal ; 2 Cor. iv. 18. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

7. Things visible and invisible ; Col. i. 16. "For by him were all things created, visible and invisible ;" i. e. all the creatures, for they are all visible or invisible ; and as there are visible, so there are invisible unseen creatures. Thus things are distinguished, into things present and to come. Now the things present, the things of this life are visible, are seen things ; and the things to come, the things of the other life are invisible and unseen.

IV. The being of unseen things is evident from the *examples* or *experience* of those that have been brought within some sight of unseen things : thus Peter, James, and John had a preludium, a prefiguration of the unseen glory of heaven, in Christ's transfiguration, Mat. xvii. So Stephen, when dying, "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Acts vii. 50. Mark, He saw into heaven, and beheld Christ there in his glory. If any would inquire here, how the heavens were opened, and how he saw the glory ; it is both beside my present work, and above my ability to satisfy such curiosity.

Again, Paul tells us, that he was caught up into the third heaven, into paradise, the place of God's glory, the habitation of saints and

angels; and that there he heard wordless words, things impossible to be uttered, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. Mark, pray, he tells us again and again, "whether out of the body, or in the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth;" but this he can tell, that he was in the third heaven, in paradise, and heard unspeakable words. So on the other side, as *Stephen* a little before his death, had a foresight of the unseen glory above, and dying, went into the full possession of it; so *Judas*, a little before his death, had a foretaste of the woe and worm below, and dying went to the full experience of it; Acts i. 25. "From which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." So the Sodomites are set out, Jude 7. not only for an example of admonition, to warn other sinners, but as an example of conviction, to convince other sinners that there is an "eternal fire;" or for an example of this truth, that there are sufferings not seen, remaining for impenitent and secure sinners, as those that hear these words shall see and find one day, if repentance and grace prevent not.

V. From *Scripture-visions*, wherein the Lord hath made clear discoveries, and visible representations of invisible things, things not seen, unto his servants. The unseen judgment to come, was thus seen by *Daniel* in a vision; Dan. vii. 9, 10. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down; and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool;

his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." And by *John*, in another vision, Rev. xx, 11, 12, 13. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works." The triumphant church was also seen, Rev. xxi.

That there are unseen things, may be proved from the very confessions of pagans and heathens: those who have not had the light of the Word, have yet had some confused, obscure, and imperfect apprehensions of unseen things, or that there are invisible things.

Socrates rejoiced that he was to die, because he should then go to see Homer, Hesiod, and other worthies that were gone before.

Yea, Bion of Boristenes, the atheist, who all his life-time had denied the gods, and derided

their worship, yet when death came was extremely afraid of dying, and that not so much because of the loss of life, or pains of death, but for the fear of what followed after death.

I might enlarge much here: from this principle those things took their rise that we find either in the poets or philosophers concerning the elysian fields, the stygian lake, &c.

From these arguments we may see that there are unseen things. The next inquiry we shall make is,

Secondly, What these things are which are not seen, and which christians are to look at.

Now the Holy Scripture, which must be our guide in this inquiry, brings us tidings of many things, that to us and all the living are not seen, do not appear. I shall at this time confine myself to, and sum up all, I shall say as to this in four heads; there are these four things which are not seen, and that it concerns us to look at:

Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.

1. The things of Death are unseen things, things not seen: as in a word,

1. The *time* of death is unseen. "The living know that they shall die." Eccl. ix. 5. But they know not when they shall die. Gen. xxvii. 2. "I know not the day of my death :" so thou and I may say, I know not the hour, day, week, month, year, wherein death will come, it is unseen. When an hour is past, or a day over, we may say that was not the day or hour; but we cannot say of the day or hour

which is yet to come, that it shall not be the time. Prov. xxvii. 1. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth;" the day thou art now in, and spending on, may bring forth unseen death. The time of death is one thing unseen, no man knows when it will be, at what day, in what year it will come, whether in youth; or in old age. O think on this, sirs, the time will come when you must die; but when this will be, is covered from you; you see it not; it may be at any instant, in any moment. Mark xiii. 35. "Watch ye therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh; at even; or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning."

2. The place of death is unseen; this is another. As we see not when, so we see not where we must die, in what place, whether at home or abroad; in the house or in the field; in the bed, or at the board. It may be thou hast been shown where it was thou wast born, in what place thou camest into the world and took thy first breath; but they that have showed thee this, cannot take thee again by the hand, and lead thee to see the place where thou must take thy last breath and die, and go out of this world into another; this is unseen, thou canst not say, lo! it is here, or lo! it is there; or, if thou wilt, yet it may be neither here nor there, but somewhere else that thou never thinkest of.

Its said of Eschylus the poet in Sicily, that

one day walking out of the town where he dwelt, to take the air, he sat down upon a high place, and having his head, which was bald, bare and uncovered, an eagle flew over him in the air, with a tortoise in her talons; and seeing his white head, took it for a stone, and so let it fall from a great height thereon to break the tortoise-shell, which broke his scull, and caused his immediate death. One would have thought that this could not have been the place of such a death, but rather that it was impossible for any thing to fall on his head, unless the heavens themselves had dropt down; but alas ! death can come on us any where, we are no where out of its reach, neither know we where it will meet us ; when we think ourselves most safe, or never think of it, it may thus drop on our heads. When Bibulus, the Roman general, was riding in triumph in all his glory through the streets of Rome, a tile fell from a house and beat out his brains. Many have seen death were they have never thought of seeing it, and thou knowest not where thou mayst see it. Ps. lxxxix. 48. "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death ?" That is the psalmist's question, it may be mine, what man is he that lives, of you that are here to-day, that can tell, where it is he must see death, which he cannot escape seeing somewhere? and its a question you can none of you answer. O that you would think of it, and labour to be such as you may be ready to see it in any place.

3. The *manner* of death is unseen: as we see not when or where, so we can as little see how we must die, by what kind or manner of death we must go out of this world: there is but one way of coming into the world, one door, one by which we all came in at our entrance, but there are many ways out of the world. Death is a hundred-headed beast, and comes a hundred ways. The Jews reckon 903 kinds of death; but among all the kinds that we may observe, we cannot see our own so as to single it out, and say, by this kind of death shall I go into another world; this is covered from the eyes of all flesh. Jacob died in his bed; Josiah by the sword; Job's children by the fall of the house where they were eating; Eli by a fall from the seat where he was sitting: death began with Asa in his feet, and struck him there ere it came to strike him at the heart. 2 Chro. xvi. 12. Death began with the murmuring Israelites at the heart, and struck them with their meat in their mouths. Num. xi. 33. We see daily some die a natural; others a violent death: some by this, some by that, and some by the other kind of sickness: some go out of the world by a death that gives them long warning, others short, and others none at all; and in this respect, I say, death is an unseen thing with you and me, we know not which of the many kinds of it, whether this, or that, or the other, is coming to let us into another world. Rev. vi. 8. There we have death riding on

his pale horse described; in the 7th verse we may see whence he came: "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, come and see; and I looked, and behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was death." Mark, he came from under a seal, and broke out upon the opening of it. Death is sealed. Death, to thee and me is remaining under the seal of the ever-living God, concealed from us and all mortals, and not to be known till he open the seal and send him out. Death, I say, is sealed; and as no man knows what is in a letter till the seal be opened, so no more do we know at what time, or in what place, or by what manner of death we must go out of this world, before the Lord break open the seal, and send death on horseback to our doors.

4. I might add the *nature* of death is unseen; we hear much of the name, but alas we see little of the nature of death: we are acquainted with the word death, but we have little acquaintance with the work or thing, death: now we talk of it, and discourse of it at a distance, but verily, sirs, when that which is called seeing death, and tasting death, meets us, death will be another thing than now it is commonly taken to be with many. Deut. xxxii. 29. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Well, this is the first; death, as I told you in the entrance on the particulars, is the door, the way, to things which are not seen;

and I tell you here again in the close of it, that this door to things unseen, is also itself unseen. Pray think of it you that are here to-day;

1. You believe you must die.
2. This thing that you call dying or death, is I tell you a door, an inlet to unseen things, things behind all that have ever been seen in the world.

3. This death that is thus a door to those unseen things, is itself an unseen thing ; the time of it is unseen, and the place of it is unseen, and the kind of it is unseen : you know neither when, nor where, nor how it will come upon any of you. Therefore certainly, sirs, it concerns you to look at this, and to look how you are provided to meet this unseen thing, that is the beginning of unseen things ; unseen judgment is next behind this, an unseen heaven or hell, salvation or damnation is next behind that ; you know not when or where you may see death, but as soon as ever you have seen death, you must see judgment ; and as soon as ever you have seen judgment, you must see heaven or hell for ever. I pray you think of it : Art thou a drunkard ? why the next time thou goest to the ale-house thou mayst see death there, and so never see house more, but hell-house. Art thou a fornicator, or adulterer ? Art thou a swearer ? Art thou a profaner of the Lord's day ? O remember, death, that is now unseen, may surprise thee in the very act of thy sin ; this is the porch and door to the unseen things of another world,

and it is also an unseen thing, a thing not seen, that leads to things not seen, an invisible thing that is an introduction to invisible things, that are eternal; the things of death I say are unseen.



SERMON II.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

II. THE things of the great day of Judgment are unseen things, things which are not seen.

There shall be such a day as this, a general judgment of all men; Acts xvii. 31. "Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." 2 Cor. v. 10. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Mat. xii. 36. "But I say unto you, that every

idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." There shall then be such a day, a day of judgment; and I say, the things of that day are unseen, are things which do not appear, therefore it is called the day of revelation : Rom. ii. 5. "But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasuresst up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The day of the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God ; in this day the righteous judgment of God shall be fully manifested, and appear to all men in this world. Eccl. viii. 14. "There be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked ; again, there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." And upon this the justice and equity of God is oft-times questioned, and accused, by the rash and preposterous judgment of men. Good men are apt to think that they have hard measure, and ill men are ready to think that God is such a one as themselves ; but there shall be such a revelation of the righteous judgment of God, as shall set all matters, and men too, to rights ; and it shall appear to all that the judgment of God is righteous : "And the heavens shall declare his righteousness ; for God is judge himself." Ps. l. 6. God's justice shall in this judgment of his be manifested to all the world, as plainly as those things which from heaven are seen here upon earth.

And when these things are tried,
 The heavens shall record
 That God is just, and all must bide
 The judgment of the Lord.

It will be, I say, a day of revelation. The righteous judgment of God shall be seen as clear as the light at noon-day, in that day: so this day is in scripture called the Revelation, the Appearing, and the Manifestation of Christ; all which phrases import a detection and uncovering of Christ in that day, behind what has been, or is seen, in this life. It will be, I say,

1. The Revelation of Christ; 1 Cor. i. 7. "Waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ;" 2 Thes. i. 7. "The Lord shall be revealed from heaven: 1 Peter i. 7. "At the appearing of Jesus Christ:" ver. 13. "At the revelation of Jesus Christ:" The original word in all these places signifies an opening, an uncovering, a drawing the veil from off that which is covered, that it may be seen. Such will this day be, an uncovering of his hidden glory.

2. The Appearing of Christ: 1 Tim. vi. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 1. The word signifies a bright or clear appearing, or shining out; and it will be a glorious appearing; or, as the words are, Tit. ii. 13. "The glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

3. The Manifestation of Christ; Col. iii. 4. 1 Pet. v. 4. 1 John iii. 2. "But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for

we shall see him as he is." The word imports an illustration, a manifestation by clear light, of something hid in darkness : Christ shall at this day come as out of darkness into light. O, sirs, there will be thus a glorious revelation, a glorious appearing, a glorious manifestation of Christ in this day, such as was never seen in the world to this day, nor ever shall be seen before that day. Remember this, my friends, there will be a great and notable day of judgment, and the things of that day are unseen things. There was a great discovery of things at Christ's first coming in the flesh, that had been hid from men of all times and ages, and kept unseen till then : Rom. xvi. 25. "According to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began." Here is an opening of the secret that there had been silence about, that there had been nothing said of in the world, from the beginning to that day ; so Col. i. 26. "Even the mystery which had been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." Here again we have a mystery which hath been a hidden secret. Thus the redemption of the world, and the calling of the Gentiles were each a mystery hid from ages and generations, and either not known at all, as among the Gentiles ; or opened more obscurely in the dark glass of types, shadows, and prophecies, as to the Jews : but this great mystery thus covered from all, was opened and uncovered at his first coming; and therefore, Luke x. 23, 24.

saith Christ, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see : For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them ; and hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." I Tim. iii. 16. "God manifest in the flesh," the accomplishment of types, and the fulfilling of prophecies. And as there was thus a great seeing of things before unseen, at the first coming of Christ in the flesh, so there shall be a greater opening of things at Christ's second coming to judgment, that have been hid from all ages from the beginning, are hid from the present age, and that shall be hid from all following ages, and not be seen till that day, that great day of the Lord reveal them. O, sirs, the things which the scripture reports unto us of this day, are all to us unseen things.

1. The coming of Christ riding through the clouds on his chariot of glory ;
The thousand thousands of angels that shall minister unto him ;
The multitude of saints that he shall bring with him ;
The glory that he shall appear in, are things which are not seen.
2. The great white throne ;
His sitting upon the throne of his glory ;
The sounding of the trumpet ;
The opening of the graves ;
The rising of the dead in countless numbers all the earth over, "When the

sea shall give up its dead,' Rev. xx. 13.
are things which are not seen.

3. The gathering of all nations, all men
that ever were, now are, or hereafter
shall be, before him;

The separation of the sheep ;

The collocation, the placing of them;

The opening of the books, that will lay
open all the thoughts, words, and works
of all men;

The standing of the dead both great and
small at the judgment seat of Christ;

The judging of the world in righteousness;

The promulgation of the final sentence ;

The execution of it, in sending away one
part with a "Go ye cursed into everlasting
fire prepared for the devil and his angels,"
in welcoming another part, with a "Come
ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the
world ;" are things which are not seen : O
sirs, these, these are unseen things.

4. The wailings of sinners, when they shall
see the Lord Jesus revealed in flaming fire
from heaven ;

The wringing of hands, when they shall
see the books opening before all the world;

The fearful tremblings, when they shall
hear themselves doomed to everlasting
burnings ;

The dreadful cries and horrible noise of
wailings and lamentations that they shall go
away with, when they are going to the

eternal prison, are unseen things. We see enough and too much of the mad mirth, and ringing shouts of profane creatures now, when they are met about their recreations. O but we see not how their cheer will change,—the cry, the cry, the doleful cry, that will be among this sort of persons, in this great day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God Almighty.

These things, sirs, and many other things of this great day, which the scripture tells us of, are to us things which are not seen. This is the second thing, pray remember it, there shall be a day of judgment, and there are great things to be seen at that day, which now are not seen, which shall not be seen till this day appear and bring them into sight: saints shall see that they have never seen before; sinners shall see that they have never seen before, all the world shall see that which was never seen before.

III. The things of Heaven are unseen things, —things which are not seen; these are chiefly meant in the text, by the things which are not seen, as both the antecedent and consequent words show; and these are unseen things I say, things within the vail, as the Apostle's phrase is, Heb. 6. 19. an expression used in allusion to the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple, wherein were the ark of the testimony, the mercy-seat, the two tables, the pot of manna, Aaron's rod, the golden censer, before

which there was a great veil drawn, that none might see them, but only the high priest, who entered once a year; Ex. xxvi. 31. "And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made." In allusion to this, I say, the things of heaven are said to be within the veil, i. e. covered and unseen. As there was a veil between the people, and that which was in the most holy place, so there is a veil between us, and that which is in heaven.

1. The things in heaven which are set down in scripture by the names; Of a better country, Heb. xi. 16. A country where there is no hunger, Rev. vii. 16. No death, Rev. xxi. 4. No night, Rev. xxi. 25. No curse, Rev. xxii. 3. By the name of paradise, the place where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, Ps. xvi. 11. By Christ's Father's house. John xiv. 2. "In my Father's house are many mansions." By a "City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; a city whose foundations are precious stones; gates, pearls; streets, pure gold; porters, angels, and that hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," Rev. xxi. 23. By "An inheritance, an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven," 1 Pet. i. 4. By a kingdom, a kingdom of heaven, a kingdom of God,

a kingdom of Christ, a kingdom that cannot be moved, a kingdom that is eternal, everlasting. By a crown of righteousness, of life, of glory. By glory, heavenly glory, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I say, the things of heaven, set out by all these names and titles, are all unseen things.

2. The things which are shadowed out to us, by the world to come: the new heavens; the new earth; the throne of God and the Lamb; the temple of God; the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal; the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, Rev. xxii. 2. are unseen things.

3. The things set out, by sitting down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, in the kingdom of heaven: by sitting with Christ on his throne; by being called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; by eating and drinking at his table in his kingdom; by eating the hidden manna, are all hidden, unseen things.

4. We see not yet what it is to see God; to see him face to face; to know as we are known; to be before the throne of God; to have him that sitteth on the throne to dwell among us; to walk with him in white; to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; to have the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne to feed us, and to lead us unto living fountains of water; to be made pillars in the temple of God, and to have the name of God, and the name of the city of God, which is new Jerusalem, and Christ's new name written upon

us ; to be ever with the Lord : to have him all in all : all these things are things which are most clearly reported to, and most surely believed among the saints, but are not yet seen.

5. The life of saints that is hid with Christ in God ; the hope of saints that is laid up in heaven ; the glory to be revealed in saints in heaven ; and the inheritance of all things, are yet out of sight.

O christians, you that are going for heaven to day, have not seen what a country, city, kingdom, company you are going to, what things you are going to see. You that have seen something of the workings of grace in your hearts from heaven, have seen nothing of the preparations of glory for you in heaven.

These are things which eye hath not seen. O be steadfast, be immovable, stablish your hearts until the day break, and the shadows fly away, the day when all these unseen things shall be seen and enjoyed for evermore : this day will bring to light and into sight more than our thoughts can at present reach.

IV. The things of Hell are unseen things,—things which are not seen: as heaven, so hell is hidden from the eyes and sight of all the living. The Greek word denotes a place unseen ; and our English word hell is from *hil*, an old Saxon word, that signifies to be hid, hilled over or covered : such is that place, such are the things of that place, things which are hilled over, things which are not seen.

1. The things in hell, which are set out in

scripture by the names of, the second death; the bottomless pit; perdition; destruction; damnation; the wrath to come; and of the wine-press of the wrath of God Almighty, are things which are not seen.

These dreadful expressions are expressions that carry in them rivers of unseen woes, seas of unseen vengeance; yea whole oceans of unseen and unutterable torments.

2. The things shadowed out to us, by darkness, outer darkness, everlasting darkness; by chains, chains of everlasting darkness; by the wine of the wrath of God; by a worm, a worm that shall never die; and by a fire, a fire prepared for the devil and his angels, a furnace of fire, a lake of fire, a furnace and lake of unquenchable and everlasting fire; I say, the things shadowed out to us by all these, are unseen things.

O, sirs, you that live impenitently and securely in sin, that scoff, and swear, and drink, and whore, and profane the Lord's day, and make light of threatenings, warnings, admonitions, as if you had made a covenant with death, and were at an agreement with hell, as they who said, Isa. xxviii. 15. "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves;" that is, as if they had said, death and hell are at amity with us, we fear no more harm from

them than we do from those that are in league with us, than we do from confederates, we are at agreement with hell, hell shall not hurt us: or as if they had said, we are in no more fear of hell, than we are in fear of our confederates; for hell is but a fable, a bug-bear, to frighten children and fools; let preachers say what they will, we care not for hell, either it is not, or it is not so terrible as they tell us. Are you of this temper, sirs? Do you live loosely and profanely, securely and carelessly in a sinful state and way, and yet say we have made a covenant with death, and are at an agreement with hell, we fear not hell, we care not for hell? Either it is not; or we shall escape it; or it will not prove so hot as we are told: why I say your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; you will find there is a hell, and this hell will be what now you are told of.

Alas, alas, you have not seen what it is, to be turned into hell; to go into perdition; to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; to fall into the condemnation of the devil; to be thrown into the great wine-press of the wrath of God; to be cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone; to be tormented day and night for ever and ever; to feel an endless rain of snares, fire and brimstone, and a burning tempest; to suffer the vengeance of an eternal fire; and to have the smoke of your torment ascend for ever and ever.

You have not seen these I say, you see not what is lying in their womb, but they will come in sight; and know to day, that as light as you make of them, they will cause you to change your shear for ever; Mat. xxv. 30. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth:" this is their case who are now in outer darkness; and though you may laugh at it now, it will be your case there: there is no laughing or jesting in hell, but only weeping and gnashing of teeth. Pray think of it you that are going for hell, you little think what a place and things you are going to, what you shall both see and feel there: the things thereof are things that are not seen; and it is not safe to make light of that you see not, nor good to praise hell before you have tried it, and woe to you if you come to try it once, for that once will be for ever.

Thirdly, The third question under the doctrine is, How these things are unseen.

You see there are unseen things, and what these unseen things are, the things of death, judgment, heaven, and hell; now the next inquiry may be this, in order to the clearing of the point, viz. How they are unseen, or what this imports or implies that they are not seen.

Now this phrase implies these four or five things,

1. That they are things which are not seen with eyes of flesh, they are not seen, that is, they are not visible to our bodily eyes, not beheld with the eye that looks upon visible

objects, and things under the sun; eye hath not seen them. My beloved, your eye hath seen a great number, and a great variety of objects, you are not able to tell how many things and how many kinds of things you have seen since you began to look out at these windows; but I can tell you what you have not seen: among all the things which you have seen day after day, you have never seen the things of death, the things of judgment, the things of heaven, nor the things of hell, these have all along been out of your sight.

Hast thou seen great things, great transactions, great revolutions? Thou hast seen no such great things, as the things of the great day of the Lord. Hast thou seen good things, things that were exceeding amiable, lovely, and desirable in thine eye, that thine eye was much taken with? Yet thou hast seen no such good, lovely, and desirable things, as those of heaven and glory are. Hast thou seen ill things, things that have been dreadful, terrible, astonishing, and amazing to thee, that have frightened thee, that have put thee into a consternation? Why, yet for all that thou hast seen no such terrible or astonishing things, as the things of hell and damnation: these are things not seen by the eye of the body.

2. It imports that these unseen things are not known, they are not seen, that is, they are not fully known and understood by us: as they are things which are not seen by the eye of

flesh, so they are things which are not seen fully by the eye of the mind ; the eye sees them not, neither doth the mind reach them proportionably to the nature of them. Alas! it is but a little that we understand of these things, our knowledge of them is very obscure, dark, confused, and imperfect, as *Job* says of the knowledge of God ; *Job xxvi. 14.* "Lo, these are but parts of his ways, and how little a portion is heard of him ? but the thunder of his power who can understand ?" i. e. all that we hear and know, and conceive of God, is little, low, and nothing to what he is; all our thoughts, meditations, apprehensions, are infinitely below his infinite majesty. So may I say of these unseen things, lo, these are part of them, these things we have hinted at ; but how little a portion is heard of them ? It is but little, very little, exceeding little, that we do or can conceive of unseen things to what they are, and what we shall find them to be. So it is in this case, he that hath not seen these unseen things, cannot believe enough of them ; and he that hath not had some experience of them, cannot understand them as they are.

One of the Fathers, branches things under three heads : 1st, Things that are known. 2nd, Things that are knowable, that may be found out by search and inquiry. 3rd, Things that are neither known, nor knowable, but reserved for another world :— and of this sort are these unseen things, they are not now known, or knowable, but the

knowledge of them is reserved for another world. Alas, the secrets of nature are much above us, there are many thousand things there that we either have no knowledge of, or know but very darkly ; the secrets of grace are more above us, but the secrets of glory are most of all above us, the knowledge of them is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain unto it. Says *Zophar*, Job xi. 7, 8, 9. "Canst thou by searching find out God ? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ? it is as high as heaven ; what canst thou do ? deeper than hell ; what canst thou know ? the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." It is as high : What is as high ? Why God's perfection, this is as high. So we may say here, can we find out unseen things by searching to perfection ; alas, no, no, they are as high as heaven ; what can we do ? deep as hell ; what can we know ?

Paul, who was a man of eminent attainments, extraordinary revelations, and stood on a higher rise of ground than any now living ; yet tells us, that he saw but in part, he saw but the back-parts of unseen things ; 1 Cor. xiii. 9. "We know in part, and prophesy in part." ver. 11. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child." He compares all the knowledge he had attained of these things, to that he had of things in the world, when he was a child. Children have but weak and shallow conceptions and apprehensions of things, such

as they are ashamed of, when they grew up to be men. There is, in many respects, as great a difference between the apprehensions we have of unseen things now in this world, and the apprehensions we shall have of the same things in the other world, as there is between the apprehensions of persons whilst but children, and when they come to be men. Alas, sirs, when you hear men of the largest abilities discoursing of these things, they do but even lisp, and stammer, and speak half words, and bits of sentences, as children ; they do but talk of them as blind men do of colours, or as you do of far countries, and rarities in them that you have never, never seen.

O, the things of heaven are other things, and the things of hell are other things than you or I think ;—unknown things ! We see not, when our conceptions are most accurate and elevated, a thousand thousandth part of that glory that is prepared for the saints in heaven ; nor a thousand thousandth part of that shame, woe, and wrath, that is prepared for sinners in hell. Heaven is not only commensurate to our greatest hopes, but as far above them, as it is above the earth ; and hell is not only answerable to our greatest fears, but as far beyond them as the east is from the west. Says Moses, Ps. xc. 11. “Who knoweth the power of thine anger ? according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.” That is, the wrath of God is every way answerable to the fear that men have of it ; and not only so, but it is behind what

we either fear or can know. Think on this under the most dreadful considerations imaginable ; and yet, when thou hast thought the worst, and all that is possible, according to thy fear so is his wrath, and more than so when poured out to the utmost. Thus these things are not seen, that is, not known.

3. They are not experienced, they are not seen ; that is, they are not tried and felt by experience, we have not had a trial of them by taste or feeling. This phrase of seeing, is often put thus for feeling in holy scripture, as Lam. iii. 1. "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath ;" as if he had said, I have felt, endured, borne affliction. So Ps. xc. 15. "The years wherein we have seen evil ;" Suffered, felt evil and affliction. Jer. xx. 18. "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow ?" Rev. xviii. 7. Ps. xxvii. 13. & cvi. 5. And in many other places, to see is to feel, and not to see is not to feel or experience. And thus this phrase may be taken here ; and so in this sense, these things are unseen things to us ; there is not a man among us to day, that has once seen them, that has tried and had experience of them in himself, that can come out and say, I have gone through death, I have been in heaven, or I have been in hell, and tried things of another world. O, sirs, these things not seen are things we have not had an experiment, a proof, and trial of ; you have not had an experiment of the things of death, nor of the things of

judgment, nor of the things of heaven, nor of the things of hell. O think of it you that are drooping saints, and servants of God ; you have not yet tried, what it is to have God to wipe away all tears from your eyes ; what it is to enter into the joy of your Lord ; what it is to receive your inheritance, to put on your crown, and to possess your kingdom ; what it is to see God face to face, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; what it is to be with Christ your Lord and love, in heaven. I say, all these, and all the unutterable things of heaven, are things you have not tried : a trial of them would make the whole world of seen things a wilderness, a weariness to you. And, O think of it, you that are daring sinners, you that make nothing of death, of judgment, of heaven, or hell, I say again, think of it : you have not tried the things you are making thus light of ; you have not tried, I say, what it is to lie down in sorrow ; what it is to be driven away into outer and eternal darkness ; what it is to dwell with the devouring fire, to dwell with everlasting burnings ; what it is to be tormented with the devil and his angels ; what it is to be punished with everlasting destruction ; had you ever tried these things, you would have other thoughts about them : they that are this day trying them, and feeling what they are, are not making light of them ; and O, if ye had but been a year, a week, a day, or a night, or an hour in hell, and seen what others are seeing, and felt what they are feeling,

you would not think it a small matter to be damned.—These things are unseen, they are things with which we have no present experimental acquaintance.

4. They are not present and entered on ; they are not seen, that is, they are not yet in being as to us, we are not yet begun with them, and entered on them, we have them not present with us. This phrase of seeing, is used thus for enjoying, possessing, or having the presence of a thing ; John iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Therefore it is said in verse 5. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Deut. iii. 25. Moses prayed that he might see, i. e. enter into and come to possess that good land. So also, Ps. xxxvi. 9. "In thy light we shall see light," i. e. have or enjoy light. So Luke xvii. 22. "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it;" that is, when you shall desire to enjoy one of these days, to have the presence of one of these days, and ye shall not see it; that is, ye shall not enjoy one of them, ye shall not have the presence of one of them with you. And so in many other places, to see a thing, is to have it present and in possession ; and not to see a thing, is to have it absent and unbegun with us. And in this respect also these things are unseen things ; that is, they are not begun with us, we are not entered on them, you and I are not yet entered

on the things of death, or on the things of judgment, on the things of heaven, or on the things of hell. O, sirs, the saints' heaven, harvest and happiness are not yet begun, but to begin, the saints' kingdom is not yet come, but to come. *Tertullian* in his book *concerning Public Shows*, dissuading the servants of God from them, hath this motive, *our feast and marriage solemnities are not yet*; so I say, the saints' happiness is not yet, it is yet out of sight, and to come: and so, sirs, the sinners and ungodly's hell, and horror, and torment, is not yet begun, but to begin. Do you see them ranting, and revelling, swaggering and gallanting it out from day to day? O think it not strange, for, I say, their hell is not yet begun, they are yet in their heaven, and their hell is to begin; their time, nay, their eternity of darkness, and chains, and fire, and weeping, and gnashing, are yet to enter on. O consider it you that live ungodly, I may say to you, as the Apostles, James v. 5. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter." Ay, but where is it, sirs, that you have lived? is it not on earth, that you have lived thus in pleasure? is it not on earth, that you are living? It is *on earth*, it is on earth only, and beyond earth there is an unseen hell. How will you live there? will you live in hell as you have lived on earth, in pleasures, in jollity, in delicacy? will you take up a sensual life, a delicate way of living, when you are in

chains, in everlasting burnings, suffering the vengeance of an eternal fire, and drinking whole cups, nay rivers of the wine of the wrath of God Almighty? O thers will be no delicacies then, your heaven will be past, as Luke xvi. 25. "Thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise *Lazarus* evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

5. I may add this: unseen things are things which are not considered, observed, or regarded; they are not seen, that is, they are not minded and regarded, or taken notice of by many. This phrase of seeing is used thus, for taking notice of, and care about a matter; Ps. lxvi. 5. "Come and see the works of God." Observe and mark them. So Mat. xxiii. 11. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment." When he came to take notice of his guests. Mat. xxvii. 4. "See thou to that:" i. e. take thou care about that, look thou to that. So also ver. 24. "See ye to it." And so here, we look, saith the apostle, at things not seen, that is, we look at things that are little looked at in the world, that are out of sight, and out of mind with many; that many never regard, or once trouble themselves about. Therefore, in this respect also, these things of death, judgment, heaven, and hell, are, as to many, unseen things; they mind them not, they take no more notice of them than if they were not: among the multitude of thoughts that are

within them and pass through them every day, there are none of this sort, no serious pondering thoughts of the things of death, the things of judgment, of heaven, or of hell. O, sirs, how many be there who have gone over twenty, thirty, forty years, and yet, it may be feared, the time is yet to come that ever they spent one single hour, day or night, one time or other, in serious thoughts about unseen things! Pray, look home, sirs, to your own selves, and see what you have done in this case. These are, I say, with many, unseen things, things they are thoughtless of, and careless about.



SERMON III.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Fourthly, **W**E shall inquire, What looking at these unseen things imports and implies.

You see that there are unseen things ; what these unseen things are ; how they are unseen ; now the next inquiry may be, what it is to look at unseen things, or what this looking at unseen things, which is the great concern of christians, includes and implies. Now this phrase includes and carries many things in it ; I shall only at this time point at these five that are bound up in it.

To look at things which are not seen, is a phrase that implies,

I. A *real valuation* or estimation of unseen things, as things meet to be minded, and deserving to be regarded by us. This phrase is thus used to denote that which deserves to be regarded and valued; 2 Kings iii. 14. And *Elisha* said, "As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of *Jehoshaphat* the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor see thee;" that is, I would not notice, nor value thee, it is *Jehoshaphat* that I look at, and regard in this matter. So here, to look at unseen things, is to reckon of them as valuable things, as things to be highly estimated by us. And this now, sirs, is our concern and duty; it concerns thee and me, and lies on us, not to slight these unseen things, as many do, as if they were poor, worthless, inconsiderable matters, not worthy to be taken notice of, or regarded: take heed of this, reckon not of death, of judgment, of heaven, and hell, as sorry, inconsiderable things, as things too little and mean to be minded; but look at them, that is, make them matters of moment, matters of concernment, of the greatest moment and concernment of any matters in all the world; for so they are, and such they will be found with every one of us another day. If there be nothing in death, judgment, heaven, or hell, to be minded or mattered by us, who are on the way towards death, judgment, heaven or hell; then there is surely nothing, nothing in the world, nor any thing out of the world, to be

made any matter of. What is it that you look on as valuable, if these be nothing with you? Surely, sirs, these are things to be looked at.—We must look at unseen things, that is, get, and keep a lively and affecting impression upon your hearts, of the weight and concernment of unseen things.

Art thou a gracious person, look at, that is, get and keep afoot an affecting, and abiding sense of the height of unseen glory thou art going to, of the depth of unseen wrath thou art delivered from, and it will teach thee, whatever comes, to reckon as the apostle, "our light afflictions," &c. If shame, if loss, if tribulation, if persecution; O, what a small pain is this to the glory to come! Art thou an ungodly, profane creature? O look at unseen things, i. e. get and keep afoot an abiding, affecting sense of that eternal glory thou art losing, of that everlasting punishment thou art in danger to drop into every day, and every hour. Either this would startle thee out of thy present security, or I know not what would.

II. *Serious meditation* on them. This phrase is thus used, not only to denote something that deserves to be minded and regarded, but also to denote the minding and regarding of it, the employing of our thoughts about it. Prov. xxiv. 32. "Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction :" I looked with a serious, observing, considering eye. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. "Look not

on his countenance ;" consider it not, conclude not by that. James i. 25. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty," i. e. bendeth his mind to meditate on it, and consider it. So Isa. li. 1, 2. And here to look at things not seen, is to admit them into our serious thoughts or take them into our solemn consideration, and to set our musing minds at work about them. And this is our concern and duty, it concerns me, and it concerns thee, and every one that is here to day, to reckon of these things as matters to be minded, and to mind them ; to mind them, I say, and to transfer our most serious thoughts to them. It is not enough to confess that they are matters of moment, a thing that I think few will deny, but we must also mind them, and have our thoughts exercised about them as matters of such moment, a thing I fear that few practise. This is another thing that is implied in this looking, viz. serious thinking at unseen things : pray think of it, hast thou never thought of death, judgment, heaven, or hell, or at most only glanced at them, and cast an eye on them by the by, while thou hast been minding other things ? Why know this day, that it is thy duty to look at them, to look, to fix the eye of thy mind and meditation on them, as thou dost the eye of thy body on the object thou wouldest look narrowly upon, or accurately at. O they are things to be looked at, and not to be glanced at, things to be eyed with all diligence, and not only on the by. Our morning

thoughts, and our evening thoughts, our day thoughts, and our night thoughts, our company thoughts, and our solitary thoughts, should be meeting at these unseen things, and spending themselves on them, in thinking what a glorious blessed thing it will be to see the unseen things of heaven and glory, we have hinted at, to see God, to see him as he is ; and what a sad and fearful thing it will be, to see the unseen things of hell and damnation, to see the worm that never dieth, the unquenchable fire, the wrath to come. These, sirs, are subjects that we should look at, that is, our thoughts should fix, settle, and dwell much on them.

III. *Fixed intention* or proposal of them to ourselves, as our great end or aim : the original word here used, signifies such a looking as a watchman useth that stands on a tower to descry enemies and dangers, and marks every corner diligently ; or such a looking as an archer when he is shooting, though he may have many objects about him on this side, and on that side, yet he looks neither on this side, nor on the other side, but straight before him at the scope or mark he aims at. This, I say, is the import of the word ; and so to look at things not seen, is to make them our scope and end, our great mark and aim in the world : and this now, sirs, is our concern and duty also, it concerns me, and it concerns thee, and it concerns every one, not only to value unseen things, and to think on unseen things, but also to aim

at unseen things ; to make unseen things our mark, to eye unseen things as the great mark we shoot at. This is another thing, I say, that is implied in this looking, to wit, a steady aiming at unseen things ; we should look on all other things, viz. seen things, as if we looked not,—as by-businesses ; but we should look at these unseen things as our main business, and end that we propound to ourselves. Pray, remember this ; have you been making seen things, the seen profits, or seen pleasures, or seen honours of the world, your great matters, your great marks that you have chiefly designed and aimed at ? Why, alas, you have been looking the wrong way ; and all the while that you have been making this your matter, how to get estates and wealth, or how to raise your names and families, or how to take your fill of sensual pleasures ; it has, I say, all the while concerned you, and lain on you as your duty, to look at things not seen, to make unseen things your greatest matters. I say, it has concerned you to make these your business, these things should have been your matters, your marks, your aims, sirs, viz. how you might get into a readiness to see unseen death ; how you might escape the things that are coming on this world, and stand before the Son of man at his coming ; how you might avoid the seeing of the unseen things of hell, the bottomless pit, the wine-press of the wrath of God, the darkness, chains and prison of the damned ; and how you might be admitted to

the seeing of the unseen things of heaven, in the paradise, the city, the temple of God ; these are the things you should have been looking and aiming at all this while, and this is yet your great concern and duty in the world. Well, this is another ; unseen things are the things that we should look at, that is, aim at.

IV. It implies *vigorous prosecution* or earnest endeavour, that we should pursue them with all care and diligence. Isa. lvi. 11. it is said of the blind and greedy watchmen ; "They all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter ;" i. e. it is their great matter they have in pursuit, and are continually driving on. So here to look at things not seen, is to pursue them as our great business in the world. As Paul, Phil. iii. 14. "I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," That is, I have eternal salvation, as the scope, or mark, or end in chase : I am making towards it up hill and down, through thick and thin, as one resolved never to rest till I have attained unto it. This is to look at unseen things, and this now, sirs, also is our concern and duty ; it concerns me and it concerns thee, not only to aim at, but also to lay out for unseen things with all our might ; we must look at them as the traveller that's on a journey looks at the end of his journey, or as a runner that's in a race, looks at the scope or mark he is to come to ; the one runs with speed, and the other rides, with haste, and both make towards the mark. Thus, I say, and on

this fashion, we should look at things not seen; as those that are travelling or running towards them, by earnest endeavour, in a diligent use of all means and ways leading unto them. O, sirs, we have many that are running and riding, that are up early and late, that are toiling and moiling all the day long, and of whose labour there is no end. But what is all this about? what is it for? Why alas, seen things, these are the matters they are seeking; and as for unseen things they either look not at them, or only so coldly and remissly, as if they cared not which end goes forward: but, sirs, it concerns you and me to be up and doing about unseen things, to be looking, i. e. taking great care, and seeking by all means, early and late, to get a sure title to, and to assure our interest in the unseen things of heaven and glory. O these are the great matters that men and women should be stirring about; striving about; labouring for; and pressing after in this world. This is another, unseen things are the things we should look at, that is, seek for, and pursue.

V. It implies *earnest expectation*, that we look at them as the great object that we expect and desire to obtain, and come to. Looking is thus put for expecting; Isa. v. 2. "He looked that it should bring forth grapes;" verse 7. "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression." Jer. viii. 15. "We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" 2 Pet. iii. 13. "We look for new heavens and a new earth." In all

which places looking is put for expecting. So here to look at unseen things, is to look for unseen things: "We look not at the things which are seen," that is, we expect not seen and temporal things, as the things that our portion and happiness lies in; but unseen and eternal things, are the things we are looking at, i. e. that we are waiting for, that we are in expectation of, that we are tarrying for; and this is also our duty, to look at, that is, make things not seen, our expectations. Many look at seen things, and no further, having nothing either beside them, or beyond them that they do indeed look for; seen things, something or other that is seen, is the utmost thing that they have in their eye: but, sirs, our looking should be over, beyond, past all that is seen, to that which is not seen: 1 Cor. i. 7. "Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. iii. 20. "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. iii. 12. "Looking for the coming of the day of God." Why, thus we should look over, look past all that we are seeing, to that which is unseen, as the great matter we are in expectation of. This now is the fifth thing; you see what looking at unseen things imports, it carries these things in it; a valuing of, thinking on, aiming at, seeking for, expecting of things not seen. It is our duty to look at things not seen; and to look at them, is to value them, to think on them, to aim at them, to seek after them, and to live in expectation of them: then we look

at these things when we make account of them as matters of the greatest moment, when we mind them as matters of such moment, when we propose them to ourselves as our great business in the world, when we pursue them as our great matter, and when we expect them as our portion; all these are bound up in this looking, and meet in this great duty: from which we may see, by the way, that this duty is a duty that very few are living in at this day.

Fifthly, Why is it the part and duty of christians to look at unseen things?

You have seen, that there are unseen things; what these are; how unseen; what looking imports. Our next inquiry may be this, Why is it a duty, and doth so much concern us to look at, i. e. to eye, aim at, seek after, and to expect things which are not seen?

Now this is our duty, because these unseen things are,

I. *Certain and indubitable*; they are not imaginary things, that consist in notion and speculation only, but certain verities; it is true, they are to us invisible, but it is as true that they are as indubitable and unquestionable: we see them not now, but it is as sure that they remain to be seen, as that there was a world to be seen when we were lying in the womb of our mothers, and saw it not. Our parents then saw a world that we were coming into, but we saw not a heaven, an earth, a sun, these were out of our sight; and many of them are now also seeing a world that we are going

into, but see not. Sirs, there is as great a certainty in these unseen things, as in any thing that you see. Are you sure that there is a sun in the firmament, because you see it with your eyes? Are you sure there is an earth under your feet, because you see it and feel it? Are you sure that there are men and women besides yourselves on this earth, because you see them and converse with them every day? Why I tell you, it is not more sure that there is a sun, an earth, a man or a woman besides yourselves, than this is, that there is an unseen death, judgment, heaven and hell before you. I have before hinted at many things of heaven, and many things of hell that are unseen; that there is a paradise, house, city, crown, kingdom, reserved for saints in heaven; and that there is a darkness, chains, worm, wrath, fire, prepared for the wicked in hell: and, sirs, these are no dreams or fancies, but most certain things; it is not more sure that I am speaking of them, that you are hearing of them at this time, than it is that there are such things, though we have never seen them, as we are now speaking and hearing of. Therefore this may be one reason why we should look at them, they are certain, therefore certainly it concerns us to look at them. If it were a matter only probable, that there are unseen things; if as much might be said against them, as for them, then mindlessness of them, and carelessness about them, might be somewhat excusable; though in that case it would be the wise man's

part to take the surest side, and say, well I see it is a question; it is a matter that is doubtful and dark, but I will carry it so as I may not be at a loss, and not know what to do if things prove so. I say, if these things were thus doubtful, yet it would be the part of a wise man to look at them: and then, what shall we do when they are unquestionable? what shall we do, I say? Dost thou believe, soul, that these unseen things are certain, are unquestionable? And dost thou not think it concerns thee to look at them? How can it be but thou must think so? Think on this, unseen things are sure things, all that I have been telling thee of it is sure, see thou to it.

II. Unseen things are *very great*, great in themselves, of great moment and concernment to us; yea the greatest things and of greatest concernment to us: this may be another reason. Sirs, unseen things are not only sure, but they are also very great things; they are no poor and trivial matters, no light and inconsiderable things that are unworthy to be regarded, though they are yet unseen, yet invisible; but I say, great, greater than any thing that is seen, has been seen, or shall be seen before they come into sight. This you may see sufficiently from what is gone before. The day of judgment will be a great day. Acts ii. 20. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." O, it will be such a sight as this world never saw, to see Christ riding through

the clouds on his chariot of glory, to see the thousands, ten thousands of angels, and all his attendants. The things of heaven are great things : to see God, and to see his face, and to see him face to face, will be another manner of sight than any of the things that are now seen. The things of hell are great things : the most tremendous things that have ever been seen in the world, are but very *nothings*, to the darkness, and chains, worm, and fire of hell. This, I say, may be another reason why you and I should look at them, that is, mind them, they are very great things : if you be not looking at them, you are looking at something else ; and whatever it is that you have in your eye, I tell you that it is very low, little, and inconsiderable, yea, nothing to those things out of your sight : go over all visible things under heaven, and the greatest of them is less than the least of those invisible things ; the greatest of the things called good in this world, are nothing to the good things of heaven and glory.

The Apostle, Col. i. 16. having divided all things into visible and invisible, does again divide things invisible, the things of heaven, into thrones, dominions, principalities, powers. And 1 Cor. ii. 9. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." There is scarce any thing more vast and boundless than the thoughts of man; yet the things of heaven are not only above what we see, but also above

what we can think, and go beyond all our thoughts of them. And as to the greatest of the things called *ill* in this world, they are nothing to the ills of hell and damnation ; this one word hell or damnation, sirs, comprehendeth greater and more dreadful things in it, than all the amazing things that were ever seen in this world. O, sirs, we speak much of unseen things every day, but the truth is, we speak little of them as they are; our expressions, our apprehensions, our thoughts of them are low, many of them unworthy, none of them reaching their perfection. The queen of Sheba had heard much of *Solomon's* glory and magnificence, such things had been reported to her, as were very wonderful, nay, incredible; she could not believe them till she came, and her eyes had seen them ; but then when she saw, she was forced to confess that the one half "was not told her." 1 Kings x. 6, 7. Why thus the ambassadors of Christ tell us much of death, and judgment, and heaven, and hell, such things as, I fear, many look on as incredible, and not to be believed by them. But, alas, when we come, and our eyes have seen them, we shall cry out, O, the one half, the thousandth part was never reported. to us of that we now see ; if thou go for heaven, chuse what thou hast heard, or may hear before thou come thither, of the glory of the place, company, enjoyments, and employments, it is not the one half, nay, not the thousandth part of what thou shalt see : if thou go for hell, chuse

what thou hast heard or may hear before thou come thither, of the shame and sufferings, there is not the one half, nay not the thousandth part of that thou shalt see there. Thus these unseen things are great, and greater than all other; therefore certainly it is our duty and concernment to look at them, that is, to mind them.

III. Unseen things are *unavoidable*: as they are certain in themselves, and as they are very great, so they are unavoidable. Unseen things will come into sight, are things that must be seen, you and I must see them: as it is unquestionable that these are things lying out of our sight, so it is as indubitable that they will all come into sight, and you and I must see the unseen things of death, of judgment, of heaven or of hell.

Death is inevitable. "Ps. lxxxix. 48. "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" What man? No man. Ps. xlix. 6, 7, 8, 9. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever: That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption."

As it is appointed for all men once to die, so for them after death to go to judgment." Heb. ix. 27. The particular judgment of

every man immediately after death ; the general judgment of all men at the great day ; and as there is no way to avoid the seeing of death, and judgment after death, no more is there any way to miss seeing heaven or hell, after death and judgment. Of all that are gone before us, from the beginning of the world to this day through so many generations, there is not one that hath not seen what we see not ; that is not seeing salvation or damnation this day ; and of all that are here to day, there is not one son or daughter, not one man, or woman that shall never see them ; no, no, we must all see them : choose whether you will look at them, or not now, you shall certainly look on them one day. And therefore, sirs, it doth surely concern us to take them into our eye : if it where either a question whether there be any such things, or a question whether you or I should see them, then to lay them out of our eye might be somewhat excusable. Ay, but sirs, both these are out of all question, and therefore, doubtless, it is a matter that concerns us. This may be another reason why we should look at them ; unseen things will come in sight, other things are questionable : if thou be sick, and would have health, it is questionable whether thou must ever see it again ; if thou be poor, and would have wealth, if thou be persecuted, and would have peace, it is questionable whether thou shalt ever see these things : many in these and many other cases, have never seen that which they have de-

sired to see, and many have escaped the seeing of that which they have been unwilling to see, and that would have been unwelcome to them, as in 2 Kings xxii. 20. good Josiah was taken away from seeing the evil that God would bring upon Jerusalem. But here is, sirs, no uncertainty in this case ; it admits of no peradventure, or may be. It is a question whether thou must have health, or peace, but it is no question whether thou must die and come to judgment. It is a question whether thou must ever see the good in the land of the living thou wouldest see, or escape the evil thou wouldest not see: but it is no question, if thou be a gracious person but thou shalt see the goodness laid up in heaven; and if thou be graceless, and die so, thou shalt without question see the fire, and worm, and wrath, prepared in hell: these are sure things. And now, sirs, if unseen things be thus certain, great, unavoidable, and things that must most surely be seen, then is there not a great deal of reason that we should look at them, and keep them ever in our eye ? And how sadly do many miscarry in this matter, who only carry those things in their eye that may and often do never come, and lay those things out of their eye that will most surely come.

IV. Unseen things are *near* : they are certain, they are great, they are unavoidable, and they are also very near unto us, and therefore it doth certainly concern us to look at them. This may be another ground ; suppose some great matter of the world of much concernment

to you, tending to your making or undoing while you live, were now coming upon you, would you not think yourselves as concerned to look at it? no question but you would. Now this great seeing of unseen things is not a great way off, but at hand, and hard by every one of you. As the Apostle saith, Rom. xiii. 12. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." So I may say to you, it is but as an hour or two to day-break, to sun-rise, that will enlighten things that are in darkness. O, sirs, you and I stand at the door of these unseen things; and if death do but once open it by any one of its many thousand keys, we shall immediately see that which we have never seen. Death, as I have told you, is an unseen thing, and it is an invisible door; here will be a beginning of them, and O how soon will this be here! Is there any more than a few days, a hand's breadth of time, a wind, a breath, a vapour, between any of us and this? Why, verily, there is no more. Job xiv. 1. "Man that is born of a woman is but of few days." Ps. xxxix. 5. "Behold, thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Job vii. 7. "O remember that my life is wind." Isa. ii. 22. "Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils." James iv. 14. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Do you not see many about you dropping away; one to-day, and

another to-morrow, and a third the next day? Why all, all these go to see things not seen. Many, sirs, are seeing these things to-day, who saw them not yesterday; and many shall see them to-morrow, who are not yet seeing them to-day; and there are but yet a few, a very few days, and there shall not be one of us who are here to-day, but we shall be landed on the shore of unseen things, to see them for ever, and never to see seen things more. Pray, think of this, if unseen things were a great way off, a long while to; if there were some ages or centuries to go over us before we should see them, why it were something: but alas, we know not, neither can we say, that there is another year, another week, or another day, between us and them. When we go out, we may see them ere we come in again; and when we come in, they may follow us at our back, and come in sight as we are sitting at our boards, or lying on our beds: shall we not then take them into our eye, and mind them? O if we would but weigh the certainty, the concernment and propinquity of these things not seen, how could we ever lay them out of our eye?

V. Unseen things are *eternal*; they are certain, they are momentous, they are unavoidable, they are near, and they are also eternal and unchangeable, therefore it doth unquestionably concern us to look at them; it will be but a while ere they come into sight. Ay, but when once come into sight, they will tarry eternally in sight; this is the reason the Apos-

tle lays down here, why they looked not at seen, but at unseen things ; "for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Here, my beloved, we have the difference between the seen things of this world, and the unseen things of the other world ; the seen are temporal, the unseen are eternal : a difference that puts an infinite weight upon unseen things, and makes them of infinitely more concernment to us than any, than all things that are seen. I say the things which are seen are but temporal ; many have seen health, and peace, and plenty, and prosperity, who are now gone from seeing them, and must never see them again : and many have seen want, and labours, and travail, and a multiplicity and variety of troubles, who are also now gone from seeing them, and shall never see them more. And whatsoever we are now seeing in this world, whether of comforts or crosses, of peace or trouble, we must see them but a while, and shall soon be sailed out of their sight for ever. All these seen things are only for a season, as the same word is rendered, Heb. xi. 25 "The pleasures of sin for a season :" for a time, as the same word, Mark iv. 17. "And have no root in themselves, and so endure for a time :" "for a while," as Mat. 13. 21. Thus seen things, whatever they are, are but for a season, for a time, for a while ; as Job xi. 16. "Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away," i. e. as that which is

quickly gone, and shall never return again. When sudden and great showers of water fall, they make great torrents and inundations in brooks and rivers ; but these soon pass away, and being once past they return no more. Why, on this fashion the godly man's misery is as waters, and the ungodly man's prosperity is as waters ; and all these seen things are as waters that pass away. But now, the things which are not seen are eternal and everlasting, not for a season, or a time, or a while, but for ever and ever,--for eternity. The things not seen in heaven are eternal : as,

There is life, and this life is eternal ; Mat. xxv. 46. "But the righteous into life eternal." Salvation, and this salvation is eternal ; Heb. v. 9. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Inheritance, and this inheritance is eternal ; 1 Pet. i. iv. "An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

A crown, and this crown is eternal ; 1 Pet. v. 4. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

A kingdom, and this kingdom is eternal ; 2 Pet. i. 11. "For so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Glory, and this glory is eternal ; 2 Cor. iv. 17. "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding

and eternal weight of glory."

And the things not seen in hell are eternal, as there is,

A pit, and this pit is a bottomless pit; Rev. ix. i, 2. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star falling from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace.

Damnation, and this damnation is eternal; Mark iii. 29. "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."

Destruction, and this destruction is eternal; Thes. i. 9. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Darkness, and this darkness is eternal: Jude. 13. "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

A Worm, and this worm is eternal; Mark ix. 44 "Where their worm dieth not."

Fire, and this fire is eternal; Mat. xxv. 41. "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Well, thus sirs, you see the difference between things seen and unseen. Seen things are in continual motion, unseen things are immovable. Seen things pass away as waters swiftly, unseen things stand still as "weeks through all generations." The things we see here in this world, we see them but for hours, days, weeks, or

years, and then they are no more. The things we must see hereafter in the other world; we shall see for ever. Now time determines and puts an end to our seeing of all that comes into sight; then eternity will never determine or put any period to what shall be in sight. And this duration, this eternity of unseen things, puts, as I have said, an infinite weight upon them, and makes them of infinitely more concernment to us than all seen things whatsoever. I say again, there are many things that call on us to keep an eye on unseen things, the certainty of them calls us to take them into our eye, and the greatness of them, and the unavoidableness of them, and the nearness of them; but this their eternal duration above all renders them to us as objects that we are most concerned to eye. Here, in this world, we regard and matter things very much according to their duration and continuance. Things that are of short continuance and soon gone, we make no great reckoning of, whether great or small, good or evil. A flower, if never so sweet and beautiful, if passing Solomon in all his glory, is not much valued, because we know it is fading; and will shortly lose both its sweetness and beauty. An ague, though it make all the body tremble, yet it is not much regarded, because it will have but a few paroxysms or fits, and then be gone; but things that are durable and of long continuance, we use to account of, whether good or evil, their duration makes them considerable in our eyes;

and shall we not then make a matter of the unseen things in the other world, that will not only be of long and lasting, but of endless and everlasting duration? O! then, what will we mind or matter? O, sirs, their eternity, their eternity!—eternity makes them things to be looked at before all temporal matters. This makes unseen good things to be infinitely good and desirable, and unseen evil things to be infinitely evil and formidable. O think on this, if thou drop into damnation, there thou must see endless woes and wrath; if thou get to heaven, there thou shalt see the pleasures that are for evermore. Now doth it not concern thee to think how thou mayest come to an everlasting happiness, how thou mayest escape an everlasting misery? This may be another ground of this truth, the things not seen are interminable. And now I have done with the particular in this point, and endeavoured to show you why it is that we must look at unseen things; and you see that the unseen things are certain, great, unavoidable, near, eternal: And, therefore, upon all these accounts, it cannot but appear to us as a matter of very near and great concernment to ourselves, to look at unseen things, if there be any thing either of religion or reason, faith or fear, understanding or sense in us.



SERMON IV.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

*While we look not at the things which are seen,
but at the things which are not seen; for the things
which are seen are temporal, but the things which are
not seen are eternal.*

WE now come to improve the doctrine.
The First Use shall be an useful Information.

It is the great duty and concernment of christians to look at unseen things; then we may hence learn,

I. *What things they are that our great concernments are lying in;* a matter that few understand or take notice of as they should, and therefore let their time, and thoughts, and cares, and endeavours, run out on that which is not the important business that their great concern lies in; but on by-businesses and inconsiderable things, that are all nothing to the main. Pray, sirs, let us think of

it, we are all busy every day; one is planting, another is building, another is purchasing, another is trading, another is tilling; one doing this, another is doing that, and everybody is taken up with something or other of the things which are seen: yet, alas! sirs, our great matters, our great concerns, lie neither in one or another of these seen things but in those which are eternal. Think on it soul, to day I say to thee, that whatever it is which thou art about, and most taken up with, amongst things which are seen, this is not thy main business, this is not thy great concern; thou hast a greater business a greater concernment than this to mind and tend, viz. thy future, unseen, eternal estate. I say, soul, the thing is, what shall be thine eternal condition? what thou shalt see in another world for ever? Thy great concernments lie in the things that are yet out of sight. This is one thing we may learn hence; and O that you would take it into your thoughts, and say to yourselves, where are we? what are we doing? what is this that we are busying ourselves about? are we not out, and off our great concernment? O, our matter is not, where we dwell, what our habitation is while among the seen things; but where we shall take up our lodging, and make our abode when we are come to unseen things;—Nor how we are accommodated with lands, meat, drink, clothes, money and other conveniences now while seen things are present; but

how we shall be accommodated, what shall be our portion, and where our lines shall fall when we enter on and begin with things not seen, that we shall never end with:—Nor who are our neighbours, our friends and relations, that we are now living and sojourning among, conversing and companying with, but who we must come to see, and with whom we must spend eternity, when we go to change seen neighbours, friends and relations, for others that are yet unseen: they are thus our unseen things, and not our seen things; our eternal things, and not our temporal things, that are our great concernments; our main matters lie in matters that are beyond all that our eyes see under the sun. Alas, sirs, it is a common thing with many to say, upon meeting with some smarting cross, or sad loss in their estates, comforts, or relations, O now I am undone, I am quite broken! and on the other side, if they meet with any special success in any of their matters, or compass any of their designs according to their desire, to say, O now I am made, now I shall be happy! but truly this is a great mistake, and you are much out when you say or think on this fashion, for seen things can neither make you nor undo you, nobody to this day was ever made or undone by them: they are unseen things that will be a making or undoing to you; the unseen things of death and judgment, of heaven and hell, are the making and the undoing things; and when these come in sight, then you will indeed be made, or undone, and that for ever.

II. *We may hence see that we have been, and are a great way out of the way of our duty, many of us.* It has been our duty to be much in looking at unseen things ; O but, sirs, have we not been little in our lookings this way, and to these things ? Pray look a little back and take a serious review of what is past, and what you have been eyeing and minding all along, and then tell me if, among the many things that you have looked at, these unseen things have not had the least room in your eye ; and then I fear there will be but few, very few, exceeding few, if they will deal truly, who must not confess that they have been very guilty in this particular.

Alas, sirs, not only our rabble of profane and dissolute persons, or our crowds and companies of mere worldlings have been strangers to the practice of this duty ; but many that have looked towards religion, have yet looked little towards this duty :—the truth is, sirs, there is little looking at unseen things. O who almost, puts a price on these ? Who carries them in his thoughts ?—Who set them before them as their mark and aim ? Who go after them ? Or, who are waiting with an earnest expectation for them ? Alas, seen things stand between us and unseen things, and as they stand between us and unseen things, so they come between us and looking at them ; we look but little over them, or behind them. This is another thing ; this truth may convince a great many of us, that we are not looking the

right way, we are not looking at the right object, or that which is our grand concernment. Alas, do we not dine and sup at our accustomed times, go to bed and rise at our hours, converse and commune as we were wont, trade, and till, and tend our occasions and matters in the world day after day; but among all suffer death to creep on us, judgment to come towards us, and another world approach and hasten every day, without taking them at all into our eye, or looking at them on that manner that matters of such moment deserve to be looked at? Truly, sirs, this text and truth speaks enough to shame us all; for where are the men, the women, the christians, the professors young or old, in one condition or another, that can say, "we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen?"

III. *We may hence learn, that there are other things to be seen than those that we have yet seen, or are seeing; we have not seen all that we must see.* It was Solomon's observation in his time, that there was no new thing under the sun: Eccles. i. 9. "The thing which has been, is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun;" All things in this world have, in all ages been the same for nature and substance; there has been no diversity, variety, or novelty, save in outward circumstances and appearances of things, than that is now, it is but the same o'er again, in another dress, which has been afore.

and that which shall be, will be no more but the same over again which now is; and there is nothing new under the sun. This he puts to men that may seem otherwise minded, viz. to name the thing that may seem to be new; verse 10. "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, see, this is new?" And then constantly affirms that it hath been in former time, "it hath been already of old time, which was before us," and only seems new to us because length of time, and shortness of life have put it out of our remembrance, as they will also do things that now are out of the remembrance of those that are to come after: verse 11. "There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come, with those that shall come after." Thus there is no new thing, but a circular revolution and return of the same things in several ages, something diversified in their circumstances. Ay, but there are new things above the sun in the other world, things that have never been seen, nor ever shall be seen under the sun; you and I have things to see that have not yet been seen by us at any time. This is another thing we may learn hence, and O, take notice of it every one of you that are hearing it, both saints and sinners; remember it you that fear God, and let it encourage you, you shall see other things than you are seeing now from day to day in this life. Are you seeing creatures below yourselves? you shall see your and their Creator in his glo-

ry and majesty. Are you seeing men made in your own form and likeness, compassed about with infirmities, corruptions, temptations? you shall see the holy angels, and come to an innumerable company of them. Are you seeing sinners running to excesses of riot, and living without God in the world? you shall see glorious saints, standing before the throne, and serving God day and night in his temple. Are you seeing shame, and reproach, and contempt? you shall see glory, and honour, and receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Are you seeing want, meeting with poverty, necessities, and straits? you shall see endless fulness, a blessed country, where you shall never see want of any thing again for ever. Are you seeing labours and travail? you shall see everlasting rest. O, sirs, you that are going for heaven, have that to see that will make amends for all the evil and trouble you are now seeing: heaven comprehends all the good that can possibly fall within the compass of your thoughts or apprehensions. And O remember this, you that forget God, you have a fine time of it, as you think, now, while you walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; and it were something if you were never to see any thing but what you are now seeing. O but there are unseen things, and you must see other things than those you are now seeing from day to day: you are now seeing peace, and plenty, pleasure, and prosperity: Ay, but

you have trouble and want, pain and torment to see. I pray think of it,—you know the king of Babylon, when he was seeing the pomp and glory of his royal feast, had something that he never thought of coming into his sight, which put him under a great consternation: Dan. v. 5, 6. "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." And now this strange, this sudden sight, marred all his mirth and music;—lords and ladies, crowns and kingdoms could not relieve him; but his countenance changed, his joints loosened, and his knees smote one against another. Why, sirs, this is your case, your very case this day: you are seeing your comforts and pleasures, but have that to see that will mar all your mirth for ever. O that you would consider it this day, if his countenance was thus changed only upon seeing the fingers of a man's hand writing over against him; O then how will it be with you, when you have the bottomless pit, and all the tremendous things therein coming into your sight? Well, sirs, this is another thing you may learn hence; there are other things to see than are now seen.

Second Use, of *Reproof*. Is it the great duty and concernment of all to look at unseen

things? Then this may reprove,

1. *Those who look only at seen things*, things which are in sight, as the gain, and glory, and pleasures of this present world; but never look so far as another world, at unseen things. And this is a very common thing many do on this manner. A great many must say, if they will say the truth, and their practices say it for them every day, we look not at the things which are not seen, but at the things which are seen. These are the things which we eye, and mind, and pursue, and are in travail after, early and late, how we may compass them, and come by them; I say, this is the common case of a great many. I fear there is no want of those here to-day, who do on this fashion, that have something or other in their eye of the things that are seen. Now if thou be one of them, I would tell thee, and pray thee consider it, that this course is a brutish, paganish, faithless, foolish, ruining course..

1. This course is a *brutish* course, proper for beasts, who have only sense to lead them, but no reason to guide them, not at all becoming men who are reasonable creatures. I say, it is the part of brutes, who have no higher part than sense, only to look at seen and present things. Thou degradest thyself from the degree and excellency of a christian; nay, thou degradest thyself from the degree of a man, and puttest thyself into the form of a beast, while thou lookest only at seen things; nay, thou throwest thyself below some brutes in this,

that being void of reason, yet look further than only to what is just seen, and present. The silly ant in summer looks as far as winter, Prov. vi. 6, 7, 8. and the stork, Jer. viii. 7. knows its season. And wilt thou be like the beasts? Nay, worse than the beasts that perish? Shall the weak ant, the poor stork, the small crane, and the turtle, and the swallow, silly and contemptible creatures, condemn thee? What an absurdity, what a shame is this! What hast thou reason for, if thou wilt make no use of it, nor distinguish thyself by it in thy practice from a beast, when God hath by giving it to thee, distinguished thee from them in thy being? Ps. viii. 6. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet."

2. This course is a *paganish* course. If thou wert a very pagan, one of the worst of the heathens, and among a nation of barbarians, thou couldst but do on this fashion. Mat. vi. 32. "For after all these things do the gentiles seek :" after these present things, and after these seen things, these poor pagans who are either wholly ignorant, and know nothing of these unseen things, or at best have but very dark and imperfect apprehensions of them, and do but give a faint and weak assent to them, are taken up with, and acquiesce in seen things: and shall there be no difference? Shall christians who differ so far from pagans in profession, agree with them in practice? Shall christians now justify heathens, and heathens

hereafter condemn christians ? How great will that condemnation be ! O think of this, you that never look further than you can see with eyes of flesh ; what a foul and gross thing it is, that you who have the gospel, the lively oracles of the living God, plain, open, noon-day discoveries of unseen things, of unseen things that are so great, so unavoidable, so near and eternal, should as the Gentiles only look at seen things !

3. This course is a *faithless* course. I know that you will profess to have faith, and say, that you are believers ; but pray, sirs, what have you faith for, or what use make you of it ? Is not faith the evidence of things not seen ? Doth it not lead to look at things not seen ? Why, verily, this is the work of faith, the office of faith ; and, therefore, while you only look thus at things seen, and make them your matters and marks, you do proclaim yourselves to be men and women void of faith. O there is hardly a greater argument of infidelity than this ; any thing that doth more speak persons to be very infidels than this ; I would you would think of it. If you had but faith as a grain of mustard-seed, there would be some looking beyond things that are in sight. And surely sirs, if you be a faithless generation now, you shall be a christless and heavenless generation to eternity.

4. This course is a *foolish*, a very foolish course ; this is another,—it is brutish, and it is also foolish : for pray what are these seen

things that you are setting in your eye? they are but,

1st. The footstool of God; Isa. lxvi. 1. "The earth is my footstool." Sirs, all the crowns, thrones, sceptres, robes, and other great things of the world, are but the footstool of the God of heaven. Whatever thou lookest on, and art set on here under the sun, why it is but a piece of God's footstool; it is but what he puts and keeps under his feet; and wilt thou set thine heart on that he sets his feet on? What is folly if this be not, to neglect looking after a place before the throne of God, only to gather up and fill thy bosom with some chips of his footstool, when and while thou hast as fair an opportunity for that as for this? None but children and fools would take up with painted pebbles when they have pure gold before them. What are they that choose to lie at the footstool, when there is an open way of ascending before the throne?

2dly. This world is the walk of the devils, where God permits the devil to have his rounds from one generation to another; Job. i. 7. "And the Lord said unto satan, whence comest thou? Then satan answered the Lord, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." This is satan's walk, and here he walks not as an idle spectator, but as a busy tempter and destroyer, making it his continual business to seduce, blind, harden, insnare men, and make them both as bad and as miserable as himself.

I say, the earth is his walk, and seen things in it are his baits, his snares, his tools, whereby he destroys hundred thousands of souls : yea, while we look at seen things, rest in seen things, content ourselves with our seen things, he walks among them, and can in a moment, if God but loose his chain, turn us out of all our seen things, as we may see in *Job's case*. Job ii. 6, 7. "And the Lord said unto satan, behold, he is in thine hand ; but save his life. So went satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown, &c."

3dly. Seen things are the world's portion, the crust that God casts out to dogs, as *Luther* said of the Turkish empire. Job ix. 24. "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked :" he suffers them to have a possession and use of the things theréof, and reserves nothing of the things of the earth from them, as things they may not share in. What canst thou name of the things here, that wicked men of the world have not had ? The apostle reduceth the things that are in the world, that are seen, to three heads, 1 John ii. 16. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ; i. e. pleasures, possessions, honours : now all these are the world's portion, and wicked men have had a fulness of them." 1. Pleasures : James v. 5. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth," says the Apostle, speaking to wicked men. 2. Possessions ; Job. xxi. 13. "They spend their days in wealth."

Ps. lxxiii. 7. "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." 3. Preferments; Dan. iv. 17. "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Wicked men have all along had, and have all these. O soul, the things thou now seest, even the finest, and fairest, and fullest of them, are but things that many a man has had, who is now in hell, and things that many have who must never come to heaven. Is it a fine house that thine eye is on? many a one has dwelt in a fine house, who is now dwelling in darkness. Is it fine clothes thou lookest at, how thou mayest go gallant, and be all in the mode? Why, alas, many that have been clothed in purple and fine linen, and decked with all manner of ornaments, are now naked in rivers of fire and brimstone. Is it great possessions thou art looking at; houses, lands, treasures? why many a one hath laid house to house, and field to field, and heap to heap, that now lack a drop of water. Now is it not a foolish course to look only at, and keep an eye on that which is no better than the portion of the world, of the men that must never come to heaven? What thinkest thou of it? art thou doing wisely, while thou art going after nothing but what is seen, when there is nothing of that that is seen, but God allows it to those that are going in the way to hell?

Athly. Seen things are the subject of God's

curse; this was laid upon these seen things as soon as man was fallen. Gen. iii. 17. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake;" the ground, that is, all this visible world, for thy sake. Under this curse it lies to this day, to the men of the earth, and with this it comes accompanied to their door. Their treasures carry a secret curse in them. Their possessions have a curse resting on them. Prov. iii. 33. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked." These seen things are left to be as fuel to their lusts, as food to their pride, and covetousness, and luxury, as snares to their souls. Now, sirs, is it not a foolish thing for men to set their eye on nothing but a Babylonish garment, an Achan's golden wedge, an accursed thing?

5thly. Seen things are fuel prepared for burning, combustible stuff that doomsday will make an end of; all these things that are now seen, are things that must all be burnt up before our eyes. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10. "The heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment.—The earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Thus all these seen things are kept for fire, a fire is kindling in their bowels that will turn them into cold ashes; think on this pray, a fire is coming, a fire is coming upon all the gain of the world; a fire is coming upon all the glory of the world; a fire is coming upon all the possessions of the world; a fire is coming upon all the habitations of the

world; nothing shall be left, nothing saved, not a penny of thy money, not a stick or stone of thy house, not a foot of thy land.

Well this is a fourth thing; this course is a foolish course, for all these seen things are but the footstool of God, the devil's walk, the world's portion, the subject of God's curse, fuel for the fire at doomsday; and is it not a very poor, sorry business, for men and women then to look no further than these, no further than the footstool? O' that men should so far lose themselves, is both sad and strange!

5. This is a *ruining*, and an *undoing* course, many have been undone by it; and it is marked out as a way to perdition. Phil. iii. 18, 19. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." Here the Apostle shows, that there were many who were walking towards destruction, and whose way would end therein. And he doth further particularly name several sorts of them; and among the rest, you see this sort of persons are one, who mind earthly things, who are wise about earthly things. Thus minders, I pray you take notice of it, of earthly things are marked for destruction; that is, such as only look after, are busy about, taken up with, and aim at present and visible things. O, sirs, this looking at seen things, is the losing of the soul and unseen

things for ever. It was a saying that *Sir Thomas More* used, "There is a devil called business, that carrieth more souls to hell, than all the devils in hell besides." O this business, this minding of earthly things, this looking at seen things undoes thousands. Sirs, if you could speak with many now in hell, and ask them what was their undoing, they would surely tell you it was this: O this,—this was our ruin.

We were thinking what we should eat and drink, and wherewithal we should be clothed, when we should have been making provision for our souls.

We were plodding for posterity, when we should have been preparing for eternity.

We were surveying our estates, when we should have been looking into our hearts.

We were casting how to drive on our bargains, to contrive our business, and compass our ends, when we should have been working out our salvation. And these, these things were our undoing; while we were thus busy, early and late, about earth, we lost heaven. When we were in the world, we minded seen things; we loved seen things, we were set on seen things; and when we came to leave the world, God told us we had that which we chose: this would be the language of many a soul. And now, sirs, will you take the way that many have met with ruin in?—that is marked as a way to destruction?

This is the first word by way of reproof, to

those who look only at seen things, at things which are in sight. You see it is a brutish a paganish, a faithless, a foolish, an undoing course. Will you continue in such a course? Will you follow pagans and brutes? Will you live as men without faith and without knowledge? O learn this lesson, this duty, to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

II. Those are to be reproved by this doctrine, who live as though there were no unseen things; no judgment to come, no heaven, no hell, nothing but what is seen, and what is present. My beloved, there are multitudes of these in our day: you may not meet with many who will say, there are no unseen things; but they live just as if they had no more to do, than to rant, and drink, and roar, and revel, and die, and so an end of all for ever; or as if they had nothing to do, but rake as much as they can of the world together, whether by right or wrong, and then die; behind which there is nothing. My friends, are any of you of this make of persons, such as are lying in wickedness, as are giving yourselves up to profaneness? Pray tell me, what have you thought,—what are you thinking of? Have you ever thought, or do you ever think in earnest of unseen things, or that there are any unseen things; that there is any such thing as a judgment to come, or a hell that the wicked are to be turned into? I say, what do you think? Are there any unseen things, or are there not? If you say

No. 2.

that there are, and be persuaded that there are things out of sight, as you are told of, and as have been hinted to you from this subject, then how can you, how dare you live on such a fashion? Do you believe that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?" as you have it, 2 Thes. i. 7, 8, 9. Do you believe that "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, shall hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and say, to the mountains and rocks fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17. Do you believe "that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? nor fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God?" 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Do you believe that "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their

part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone?" Rev. xxi. 8. Why then you must believe also, sirs, that your are by these your doings, undoing yourselves, damning yourselves, sinking yourselves to hell for ever. You must believe there is a time coming on you, when you will be put to cry to the mountains and rocks to fall on you, when you must be excluded from an eternal weight of glory, and lie down in everlasting flames.

And if you say, or think there are no unseen things, you will be sadly disappointed and deceived, for, as you have here seen, they are both sure and unavoidable, and also near unto you; and it is but a while and you will all be convinced, and that beyond any possibility of ever making a question of it again to eternity, that death is not the end of all things with you, that all is not done when the body falls into the dust, but that there is then a beginning, a beginning that shall never have ending, of things that now are out of sight: pray think of it; and as you would not see everlasting sorrows, everlasting weepings, everlasting damnation, break with your present courses, and live as those that look for the coming of things unseen.



SERMON V.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

III. **I**T may reprove christians, those that have made religion their business more than others, *that they have not made this their business more*, that they have not been more careful in looking at unseen things; in aiming at; in seeking of; in following after; in clearing their title to the unseen things of heaven and glory.

Alas, sirs, this is verily a fault among christians, we are much in looking af seen, but we are little in looking at unseen things. That you may not live in this neglect, but be more in looking this way, pray consider;

I. *That you are not much concerned to look after seen things, for they are but temporal, they will not last as long as eternity*

lasts ; nay, they will not reach another world, not go one step with you in another world : as soon as ever you are passed into another world, "The former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 4., i. e. all the things that are present, both good and bad : none of the ill things of the present world will follow the saints into another world ; nor will any of the good things of the present world, follow sinners into another world ; seen things last but a while, reach but a little way.

II. Unseen things are the best things, better than any thing that is seen ; weigh what you will against them, and you will find they can bear no weight with the things of heaven. As,

1. If you weigh against them riches, gold, silver, all the treasures of darkness, and hidden store of secret places, yet they will all be inconsiderable, and amount to nothing ; less than a drop of water to the ocean, than a lump of lead to a mountain of pearl ; they are things of no worth in heaven, things that have no place in heaven ; it is a country, as the martyr said, where money bears no mastery, where that that goes here for hundreds and thousands, will not go for pence and farthings.

2. And if you weigh against them honour, and power, and greatness, why as little is there in them to bear any proportion with the things of heaven ; add these to the former, and put both together, viz. all the treasures, and all the crowns and kingdoms under heaven, in

the balance with the crown and kingdom of heaven, and they will be less than little to them.

3. If you weigh pleasures against them, you shall still find they weigh nothing ; add these to the two former, even all the delights of the sons of men, and put all three together in the balance with the unseen things of heaven, and they will be of no weight ; unseen things are the best things ; there is no worth in riches, to the riches of glory ; there is no weight in crowns, to the crown of glory ; there is no sweetness in pleasures, to the pleasures, the rivers of pleasures at God's right hand.

III. *Nothing short of unseen things is of any moment, or worth looking at ; unseen things are not only the best things that you or I can look at, but there is nothing else we can look at that is of any moment.* The Holy Ghost speaking of seen things, useth most diminishing terms, he calls wealth, thick clay; Hab. ii 6. "Woe to him that ladeth himself with thick clay !" The dust of the earth, Amos ii. 7. "They pant after the dust of the earth." Wind, Eccles. v. 16. "What profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind ?" Grass and the flower of the grass, James i. 11. "The sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth : so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." He stiles power, and pomp, and glory, Fancy, Acts xxv. 23. The whole world

a surface, an out-side, an empty shadow, 1 Cor. vii. 31, "For the fashion of this world passeth away." A vain show, Psal. xxxix. 6. "Surely every man walketh in a vain show." On this fashion the Holy Ghost speaks of these seen things; and surely on this fashion, they who are seeing unseen things, are thinking of seen things to day; the best, the greatest, the choicest of them, are but clay, and dust in their eyes. Alas, look but on seen things in the glass of scripture, and you will see there is nothing in sight that deserves to be looked at; they are either unseen things, or nothing that you must make your object, Eccles. i. 2, 3.

IV *All your happiness lies in things unseen.* Those Grecians lost the comfort of their lives, saith the bisterian, who saw not Alexander sit in Darius's throne. I may say, those lose the comfort of their lives, that do not lift up their minds to the high things belonging to the heavenly throne. Alas, there is no true and solid happiness to be had in seen things; all the things that are under the great vault of heaven, and on this side the sun and moon, how fair soever they look, are but the drossy part, as we say, of God's creation: like the goats' hair and badgers' skins on the tabernacle without, that was overlaid with gold within; gold within, and skins without; so, I say, these seen things are but very sorry things, poor shadows, empty vanities, broken cisterns; nothing to unseen things, nothing that can make us happy.

V. *Your unalterable and unchangeable happiness lies in unseen things, not in any thing that is in sight.* It is true, sometimes seen things may have such a kind and favourable aspect towards you, as may tempt you to say as *David* once, Ps. xxx. 6, 7. That your mountain is made to stand strong, and you shall never be moved. But as he was presently convinced of his mistake, so will you find yours; for, alas, this world is the stage of changes and revolutions, wherein all things are on a wheel and in motion. The sun rises and sets; seas ebb and flow; winds rise and fall; rivers run day and night; cities and kingdoms are up and down; persons and families are coming up and going down; rich and poor are meeting. 1 Sam. ii. 4, 5. "The bows of the mighty are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength. They that were full, have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry, ceased: so that the barren hath born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble." All things are, as we say, on their feet, none can sit or lie; some go backward, some go forward: it were endless to enumerate the changes that are acted every day upon the stage of this world; here is no constancy, no stability in any thing, this is only to be found above in the unseen world, and there all things are unchangeable and unalterable for ever. God the portion and happiness of his chosen, is unchangeable; angels unchangeable; saints unchangeable;

the heavenly mansions unchangeable ; the riches of glory ; the joy in God's presence ; the pleasures at his right hand, are for evermore ; here will be an unchangeable, unalterable state of rest and happiness, without any flux or re-flux, change or variation for ever. O, therefore, christians, check yourselves that you have not looked, that you are not looking more at unseen things, and longing more to come unto the seeing of them. It is reported of great Aristotle, that he should say when he was dying, "I rejoice that I am now going out of a world of contraries." How much more may the serious christian rejoice, to think of going out of a world of contraries, and off a stage of changes, to unchangeable blessedness.

The Third Use, is a use of *Exhortation*.

It is the great part, duty, and concernment of christians to look at unseen things. Then it may be for exhortation to christians, in these three things :

I. *Look at, and fix your eye on unseen things.* Christians, be persuaded to look at things which are not seen, above, beyond, and past all that are now in sight, over all that is present, to the future and unseen death and judgment, heaven and hell, that are yet out of sight, yet unseen. Consider, this looking at unseen things will be of very great advantage to you on many accounts ; it is your duty, as you have seen, and it will be your gain and for your good, as you may see, if you consider these seven or eight things : this

looking at unseen things will help very much,

1. *To mortify your hearts to seen things,* to the world and the things thereof. Seen things are full of snares, the world has been the destruction of a world of souls ; it is a blessed thing to have a heart that is loose from, and dead to it. Any thing that tends to part, and keep the heart and the world asunder, deserves to have a room and place in our hearts. Now nothing is more sovereign in this case, than a close and constant practice of this proposed duty, a looking at unseen things. He that looks at unseen eternal things, will make light of seen temporal things ; this will take affections off things below, up to things above. It is said the great cities of *Campania* seem but small cottages, to them that stand on the top of the *Alps*. So truly all the great and specious, and precious things of the world, that so many eyes admire, and so many hearts dote on ; all the thrones, crowns, pleasures, profits, beauties, braveries, and glories of this world, seem but little to them that have an eye looking at that within the vail. If you look but a little upon the sun, why when you look down again upon the earth, you can scarce for a time see any thing of all the things about you ; the light and beauty of that which you have seen, makes these things disappear : so, a looking at unseen things will greatly darken and lessen seen things in our eye, and make them that we shall see little in them to be

much set by. Some writers say, that after *Lazarus* was raised from the dead, he was never seen to smile, or make any matter of the things of the world; he had seen that which kept his heart dead to these things, as poor and worthless. My beloved, if we might suppose that some of the saints now in heaven should be sent back again to us in this world, what would they do? How would they look on all these things? Do you think they would be taken with, or press after them? Would they fall in love with your houses, or fields, or gardens? Would they set by your gold and silver? Would they make any thing of that you make most of? Surely, no, the whole world would be no other than a wilderness to them; they that tread the sun, the moon, and the stars under their feet, would surely trample all that is specious in the earth under their feet as so much dung. And as they would make nothing, so surely christians, who are going to share with them, would make less than ordinarily they do of all seen things, if they looked but more to unseen things, to the place and possessions of the saints in light. Wouldst thou be accompanied with a mortified heart to the world; to the lusts of the world; to the pleasures of the world; to the greatness of the world; to the gain; to the glory of the world? Then look at unseen things.

2. It will help to make you content in every condition, and with whatsoever is your

portion in this world. The holy Apostle had his conversation in heaven. Philip. iii. 20. "For our conversation is in heaven :" and had learned, Chap iv. 11. "in whatsoever state he was therewith to be content." His converse with heaven, had taught him to be content with his condition on earth. O sirs, believing views of the things above, that a believer is going to, are enough to make a christian say, when in the worst, most needy, and wanting condition in the world, with David, Ps. xvi. 6. "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places ; yea I have a goodly heritage." Yonder is a better country, where there is no curse, no night, no hunger ; yonder inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away ; yonder kingdom, crown, and weight of glory will make amends for all. Wants are now hanging on me, but I shall want nothing when I am come to my father's house, to the new heavens, and the new earth, to the pure river of the water of life, and to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God ; all will be well in the world to come, and I shall have enough when I am called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and brought to eat and drink continually at his table in his kingdom.

I remember Jerome, comforting a young hermit that was sad, bade him look up to heaven. So may I say to you that fear God, when you are in a wilderness, when wants are on you, and discontented passions are ready to

rise, then look up to heaven, look at unseen things, and so long you will not be discontented ; the thoughts of seeing God, and following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, will be enough to make you at peace with your present states.

3. *It will help to lessen all the losses of the world and of seen things.* The believing Hebrews did not only bear the spoiling of their goods, but took it joyfully, Heb. x. 34. But how came it to be thus? How came they to take this so cheerfully, which has broken the heart of many a one in the world? Why their eyes were looking upwards as high as heaven, and the things of heaven took away their discontent; "knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Mark, their eye, the eye of faith and hope was on the eternal riches in heaven's keeping for them; and this was their encouragement, this made them to bear their losses. Do losses come upon me? do I lose this, and that, and the other comfort and enjoyment? why, while I look at things not seen, I see I shall not need them; I see I shall have better in the room of them; I shall have comfort that cannot be lost. When the Danites had taken away Micah's idols, and priest, he cries out after them, Judges xviii. 24. "what have I more?" that is, as though he had said, you have taken all, you have left me nothing: thus it may be with a carnal person, he may lose this to-day, and that to-morrow, and so on till it come to

this, "what have I more?" But it can never come to this with a gracious person; let losses come on him as thick and as fast as on Job; yet after, and at the end of all, he can look up and say, I have a treasure more, I have a crown more, I have an everlasting kingdom more, I have a whole world more, out of sight and danger too; that and the other thing is gone, but it is not Christ, it is not heaven, Christ is left, and heaven is left: and this now cannot but very much lessen any loss.

4. *It will help to lighten all the crosses and afflictions in the world.* Our Saviour himself went through the sufferings and shame of the world, with an eye fixt on the joy set before him. Heb. xii. 2. "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Mark, pray, for the lightening of the cross, and shame, he took the joy in his eye, and this joy in his eye, took the weight out of the cross, and the shame out of the shame of the world, "for the joy that was set before him." And christians are here called to look at him herein, as their pattern and example that they are to follow in like cases, "looking at Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." The apostles here in this place had their sufferings lightened by this; and in the verse foregoing the text, you have them weighing their affliction and finding it light, measuring their affliction and find-

ing it short; but how came it to be thus in their account? Why this you have in the text; "while we look not at things which are seen, which are temporal, but at things which are not seen, which are eternal :" their present and seen affliction was light, while they weighed it with the weight of unseen glory; and it was likewise short while they measured it with the eternity of unseen glory. O sirs, there is enough in unseen things to lighten any cross, suffering, or affliction a christian can come under, and to make him quiet, silent, and patient under all. The unseen things of heaven are enough to quiet, the unseen things of hell are enough to silence under all: look, soul, but either of these ways when thou art going under any cross, and so long sure it cannot be heavy on thee. Are sufferings now on thee? Look at the prison, chains, darkness, worm, fire of the damned; what they are suffering on whom God is raining snares, fire, brimstone, and an horrible tempest; and thou canst not think thine heavy; or look at the rest, joy, goodness, glory, laid up for the saints in heaven, and thou canst not but say with the apostle, Rom. viii. 18. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present life, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed."

5. *It will be a remedy against all temptations:* while Moses' eye was upon the recompence of reward, theriches, honours, and the pleasures of Pharaoh's court were easily overlooked. Heb. xi. 25, 26, 27. Choosing ra-

ther to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in *Egypt* : for he had respect to the recompence of reward." By faith he forsook *Egypt*, not fearing the wrath of the king ; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." This sets a christian above temptation as it were, it mortifies to the world, which is commonly the matter of temptation. The great baits that satan makes use of are the things of the world ; he tempts sometimes with the beauty, sometimes with the gain, sometimes with the glory, and ordinarily with something or other of the world. Now, I say, this looking to things unseen, helps to crucify to the world the matter of temptation, and so is a special antidote against temptation ; for when the heart is dead to the matter of a temptation, it will not easily fasten on the tempted : besides, the looking at unseen things brings greater things into sight, than any that can be presented in a temptation. Does the tempter come with specious and alluring temptations, as he came to our Saviour with all the kingdoms of the world, and all the glory of them ? Why an eye set on unseen things, sees greater things than all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. Doth he come with terrifying and affrighting temptations, as bonds, or banishment, or tortures ? Why an eye set on unseen things, sees worse : unseen glory in heaven is greater than all the

seen excellencies on earth; and unseen torments in hell are worse than all the seen tortures of this life; this is another privilege of looking at unseen things. Would you be out of the way of temptations, temptations that have cast many a one down, and cost them much of their peace and comfort in the world? then be much in this duty, keep an eye on unseen things. When a temptation comes in its power, look before you as far as death, as judgment, as heaven, as hell; and while these are in your eye, they will keep your heart and the temptation asunder. As long as the bird keeps above in the air, she is out of the way of snares, her falling into these is by lighting on the earth.

6. *A singular remedy against sin in these sinning times*, wherein iniquity abounds: Solomon prescribes this to young men, Eccles. xi. 9. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Mark, that they may be stopped in these courses, he calls them to look over their present ways, to the unseen judgment before them. O sirs, these unseen things have much weight in them, if christians would but carry them on their hearts, and look at them when sin is at the door. I have read of a young woman, who being pressed by a gallant to gratify his lusts, answered him, if you

will but grant me one request I will do what you desire: What is that said he? why, saith she, it is but this, do but hold your finger one hour in the blaze of this candle: he replied, no: then said she, will you not for my sake hold your finger one hour in this candle; and would you have me throw myself into an everlasting fire for you? and this silenced him. Why, christians, pray try this course, when sin is at the door, when you are ready to go out to any evil, take unseen things into your eye, look at death, judgment, heaven, and hell; and see if you can, if you dare meet or meddle with that sin, with these in sight, or while they are in sight; surely, sirs, this would be a mighty great preservative. If you would but walk more as seeing things invisible, you should be more undefiled in the way.

7. *It will make you more fit to live anywhere, in any place, among any kind of persons.* He that hath filled his eye with unseen things, is prepared to live among a generation of profane creatures, without being drawn to run with them to the same excess of riot. Among a company of worldlings that are crying up the mammon of unrighteousness, without being enticed to approve their way by seeing them hurry and rake this world together by all means. Among persons of mutable and temporizing spirits, that are off and on, one thing at one time, another at another time: he that looks at unseen things, has that in his eye which will keep him one and the same at

all times, and in all places ; a *Noah* in the old world, a *Lot* in Sodom, a *Job* in Uz ; a God-fearing person wherever he comes or is cast.

8. *Looking at unseen things will make you more willing to die, and go to the seeing of unseen things.* Whence is it that many christians are so loath to leave seen things, to part with seen relations, and seen possessions, and seen comforts ? Is it not from a want of lively apprehensions, and believing views of the unseen provisions made for them in heaven ? I remember to have read of a devout pilgrim travelling to *Jerusalem*, who in his way passing through many great cities, and seeing many rare and choice monuments, yet took no content in any thing that he saw, but would still say, this is not *Jerusalem*, this is not *Jerusalem* ; why so truly if we had but our eye as the apostle, on things unseen, we should among all our seen comforts, say, this is not heaven, this is not seeing God, seeing his face, seeing him face to face ; this is not being before the throne, this is not the inheriting of all things ; and our hearts and souls would be more there, more set on going thither.

II. This may serve to exhort us to prepare for unseen things. Are there such unseen things ? O then, sirs, let it be your great matter now, day and night, to get into a readiness for a comfortable seeing of these things which are not seen. This is the next word I would leave with you, I pray take it up into your practice, and make

it your work. Heb. xi. 7. "By faith *Noah* being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house." My beloved, I may say you have been warned of God this day, by the hand of one of his messengers, of things not seen as yet. You have been told that these things not seen as yet, are certain and great, greater than the things that *Noah* was warned of, and unavoidable, and near, and eternal : O do as *Noah* here in this case did, i. e. believe the coming of these things not seen as yet. Fear, fear being taken unready by them at their coming ; and prepare an ark to the saving of yourselves ; make provision, timely provision for the coming of these things ; that as *Noah* and his house were saved when the deluge came, so you may be saved in the day when these things begin to come to pass. I might tell you that you are warned of them for this ; that you are called to this, to prepare an ark ; that you have means and helps intrusted with you for this ; that you have your time for this ; that you must not tarry long with seen things ; that dreadful things will come in sight, and continue for ever in sight, if you have no ark, no provision ready ; that glorious things will appear at this appearing of things not seen as yet, to them that have made due and seasonable preparation for them ; only let me give you a word by way of direction : If you say, but how may we prepare an ark to the saving of ourselves ? How may we pro-

vide and get into such readiness as when unseen things come into sight, we may see God ? Why, in a word, I would tell you ;

1. Negatively, *That seen things will be no provision for unseen things*, will not serve to meet them with. I pray you take notice of it, they are seen things now that we spend most of our time on, that we lay out most of our care about, that we make the greatest stir about ; yet alas, I tell you, none of them all, neither one; nor another, will be provision to meet these unseen things with ; dear sirs, when you have done all that ever you can, and laid up the seen things together, they will all serve for and signify nothing : you cannot, you cannot meet death with houses and lands, you cannot go to judgment with gold and silver, you cannot go to heaven by master and sir, by titles and greatness among your neighbours ; think a little of it, I pray, with yourselves when alone. Seen things will be no provision for unseen, they may be your undoing when you come to enter on unseen, as they have been to many thousands who are gone before, but they cannot be any provision for them. Remember this, while you are hurrying up and down among seen things and for seen things, you are wearying yourselves for things that will not profit, when unseen things come upon you.

2. *Only unseen things are provision for unseen things* : things that will serve to meet them with, as an interest in Christ, a new creature, a pure heart, a good conscience, a

treasure of saving grace laid in ; these are the things that will be provision to meet the things with not yet seen. When the flood came upon the old world, houses, and lands, and treasures, and multitudes of friends, and all seen things they had about were nothing ; many a one then perished, that had a fine house, a fair estate, that was living in the midst of pomp and pleasure, and plenty ; and only *Noah* and his house that had the ark, and were got into it, were saved. So, sirs, when these things begin to come into sight, all seen things, as I have said, will be nothing ; it will be all one, whether you have houses or no houses, riches or rags, all will be if you have the ark, i. e. if you have Christ, if you be in him ; only this, an interest in Christ will carry through unseen death, through unseen judgment, and to unseen glory, to the new heavens, and the new earth, to the throne of God, and of the Lamb, to the temple of God, to the crown of life, the kingdom of heaven, and the inheritance of all things. 1 John v. 12. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life :" Life in death, life at judgment, life in glory, and shall live with God for ever. This, this is the provision that will not fail. So that if you would be in readiness for this seeing of unseen things, see that you get into the ark, that you hang not about it only by a general profession, but that you come into it ; that you get a possession of Christ, a part in

Christ, and then you are safe ; then and never till then you will be ready. A man in a market is then ready to go home when he has done all his business that he came about, when he has bought in provision for his house, &c. and so a person is then ready for this great opening of unseen things, when all his time and worldly businesses are ended, and his provision for eternity are in readiness ; and this is when he is got into the ark, Christ.

III. We may hence be exhorted, *to desire and seek to come to the seeing of these unseen things.* This is the third word : look at ; prepare for ; seek and long to go to the seeing of them. If looking at them was such a cordial and corroboration to the apostles among their many pressures : O then what, what is this seeing, this enjoying of them ? It is said of the patriarchs, that they were strangers and pilgrims, Heb. xi. 13. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Ver. 16. "They desired a better country." Of Abraham, Ver. 10. it is said, "he looked for a city which had foundations." Why on this fashion christians live as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, seeking a city, looking for a better country, and desiring to go to see the things that God hath prepared.

O methinks this news of unseen things should set afoot great desires, longings, and

breathings in christians after heaven, where they are to be seen. But O the unbelief and carnality that lodges in us ! If we were told of wonderful things that were fallen to us in far countries, what haste would we make towards them ! how loath would we be to tarry from them ! how long should we think it ere we came to them ! but alas, the Holy Ghost hath made great discoveries to us of glorious things within the vail, of crowns, and kingdoms, and rest, &c. and yet we linger here among seen things, make little haste towards unseen things, nor think it long that we are from them. Pray consider, in a word, christians, that your desires after this seeing of unseen things may be warmed and raised, I say, consider these three things :

1. *Who and what is there* ; viz. in heaven : that this may quicken you to this longing for, I may tell you,

1st. *That all our best friends are there*, your Father is there, and your Christ is there, and your Comforter is there, and your brethren are there ; all the sons, and all the daughters of God, who have been going hence from Adam to this day, are gone thither, and are now there. Is it not very desirable to go to, and be with them ? Where should a child of God choose or desire to be, if not there where his father and all his best friends are ?

2dly. Consider that *your best estate is there* ; as your best friends live, so your best estate lies there ; your rest, your inheritance, your crown,

your kingdom, your world, and your all lies there. It may be, here you have no rest, but there you shall have no labour. Here you have shame, but there you shall have a crown of glory. Here you have no inheritance, not so much as whereon to set a foot, or at most but a poor, narrow, and dirty one, full of incumbrances ; there you have a full and fair inheritance. Here you are pent up in a narrow compass ; there you have a whole kingdom, a world of your own to turn you to ;—where should you desire and choose to be ?

3rdly, *Your everlasting home is there*, your eternal abode, the place where you shall be for ever and ever. Here you are as strangers in a foreign country, as travellers in an inn ; there is your country, there is your home ;—how should you long to be there !

II. Consider what there is not,—what you shall *not* see there. The Jews that were left of the captivity, were set on going into Egypt, because there they hoped to be exempted from the dangers and wants that attended them in their present station : Jer. xlii. 14. “We will go into Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread ; and there will we dwell.” O sirs, how should saints be set on going for heaven, where they shall see no war, nor hunger of bread ! O think of it. There you shall see no lusts to entice ; no devil to tempt ; no world to seduce ; no afflictions to load ; no labours to weary ; no cares to perplex ; no

losses to vex ; no evils to exercise and disquiet : All these things that are now seen, shall then be unseen things for ever. Saints now in heaven are seeing none of them, shall never see any of them again for ever. Do you now, sirs, conflict with all, or most of these, day after day ? Do you groan and sigh under them, and are your lives imbibited by them ? Why should you not long then to be at the unseen things, where these will be unseen for ever ?

III. Consider *what you shall see there*, but how can I tell you this ? They are unseen things that are to be seen there : beyond all that hath been seen, and past all that can be thought by the sons of men ! Expect not to be told, till you come to see : Only I may tell you, that when you are come to the seeing these unseen things ; Then,

1. *You shall see God* ; John i. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." A sight of God is beyond all that is attainable here : but there you shall see him face to face : 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face : now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known." Then, i. e. in heaven, 1 John iii. 2. "But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is." You shall then see the divine Essence, the Trinity of persons, the great mystery, God manifest in the flesh, the personal union of the two natures

in the Son of God, the glorious attributes of God.- His almighty power ; his infinite wisdom ; his boundless goodness ; his bottomless mercy ; his endless love, &c. And O, this will be another manner of sight than any that ever has come in sight !

2. *You shall see the angels*, the holy angels of God ; their infinite number ; their beautiful order ; their blessed work ; their glorious properties and perfections. O what a sight will this be ! If when only one angel appeared to the shepherds, in his night-clothes as I may say, they were surrounded with so great glory, that it is said, Luke ii. 9. "The glory of the Lord shone round about them," that is, a transcendent and surpassing glory ; I say if the presence of one angel was accompanied with so great a glory, then what will it be to see the thousand thousands that minister to Christ; and the ten thousand times ten thousand that fall down before him !

3. *You shall see all the saints of God*, all that are gone to God, and are with God this day in glory. If, my beloved, but one of these were sent from heaven ; if but *Abraham*, or *Moses*, or *David*, or *Peter*, or *Paul*, should come again into this world, how far would you not go to see this one ? When *Lazarus* was raised from the dead, it is said, John xii. 9. "And they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see *Lazarus* also, whom he had raised from the dead." The rarity of the sight, of a man that had been in, that

was come out of another world, brought many from far and near. Why so would you not go a great way to see such a man? How willing then should you be to go to heaven, where you shall come to see, not one, but all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors and saints out of every nation under heaven. Here you shall see *Abraham*, and *Moses*, and *David*; here parents shall see their children again, and children their parents; husbands shall see their wives again, and wives their husbands; pastors shall see their people again, and people their pastors.

And you shall not only see them thus, but see them without all those afflictions, burdens, blemishes, corruptions, imperfections, and infirmities that did accompany them in this state, and clothed with glorious perfections.

4. *You shall see all those great things, which the great God hath prepared for his saints before the foundation of the world*; the things that are, as before, set out by the names and titles of a better country, paradise, a house, a city, an inheritance, crown, kingdom, and the rest. You shall see all, all these, all the things wherein the purposes and counsels of the Father, the purchases and performances of the Son, the workings and operations of the Spirit, meet in their perfection, and have their full, perfect, and eternal accomplishment and consolation. O who would not long for such a sight? Who would be unwilling to go from

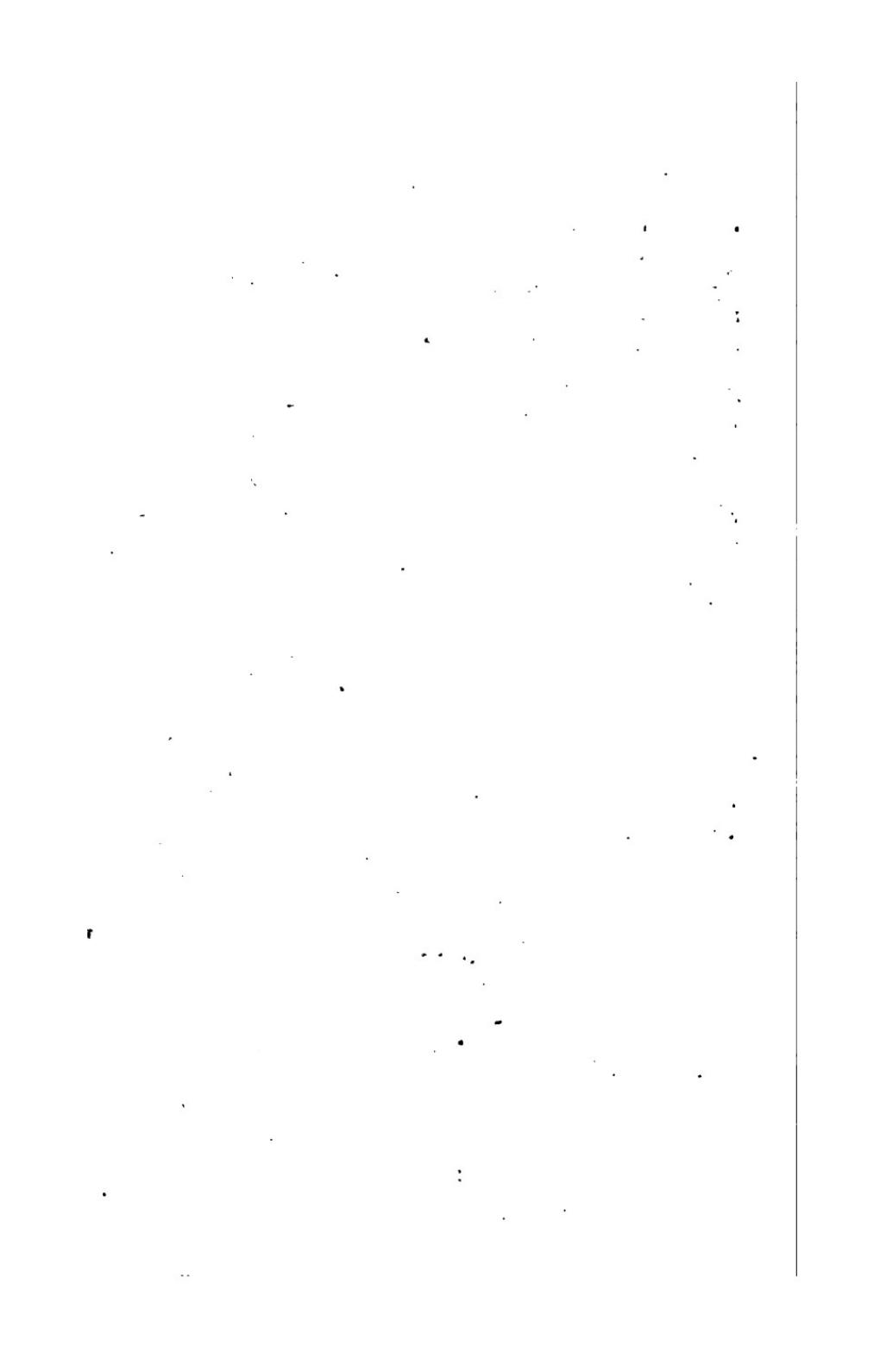
seeing sin, and sorrow, and want, to see such a sight as this for-ever?

5. I might further tell you, that *you shall there see a clear and satisfying resolution of all hard and doubtful questions*, a full determination of the voluminous controversies and disputations about the great mysteries of election, redemption, justification, sanctification, the resurrection, consummation, judgment, &c.

6. *A plain and full exposition of all dark and obscure places in the scriptures*; the true and full meaning of every text, even those that now the numerous and voluminous commentaries of the most learned and eminent writers of all ages, leave us in the dark about. There are things hard to be understood: and knots that cannot be untied. But then dark things shall be perfectly cleared, and doubtful things fully resolved to plenary satisfaction.

Let then these considerations induce us to desire and seek to come to the seeing of these unseen things.





THE
BOOKS OPENED;

BEING SEVERAL

DISCOURSES

On Rev. xx. 12.

BY THE REV. HENRY PENDLEBURY, A. M.

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THE

EPISTLE TO THE READER.



Christian Reader,

THERE are two things which if firmly believed, and duly considered, would have a great influence upon men and women's lives, viz. First, that they are *mortal* and secondly, *accountable creatures*. It is the indispensable statute-law of heaven that never will be repealed or dispensed withal. Heb. ix. 27. Death is a debt which all men owe, and how soon the great creditor may exact it, none can tell. We are all here as tenants at will in cottages of clay, whose foundation is in the dust. These earthly tabernacles are continually mouldering down about our ears, do what we can by food and physic to patch them up for a little while. There is no man that liveth, and shall not see death. And death hath

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always judgment attending at the very heels of it. And as the tree falls, so it lies. As death leaves us, judgment will find us. And as it is with us when we go out of this world, so it will fare with us for ever. This short uncertain life we have here, is the only time of preparation we have for another world. Death sets men on the other side the water, there will be no working there, no praying or repenting, and believing, and seeking to get our sins pardoned, and an interest in Christ, and a right to heaven: if this work be to be done then, we shall be undone to all eternity. If we once die in a Christless and graceless condition, we shall perish for being so to all eternity. There will be no time then to correct former mistakes. At death we must all appear before an impartial Judge, to receive our final, conclusive, determining sentence to a fixed, eternal, unchangeable state of misery or happiness in another world. And things will then appear quite otherwise than they were stated, and did appear here. Then all wizards and masks will be plucked off, and naked breasts will be in fashion. What hath been here concealed, will then be made manifest! What hath been spoken in secret, will then be told on the house top. Nothing hid but shall then be made manifest. At this opening day there will be a manifestation of the sons of God: then all the sincerity and secret graces and holiness of believers will be openly declared, and all those marks and evidences of the truth of grace,

TO THE READER.

which here are often clouded and obscured, will evidently appear. And all the secret wickedness and hypocrisy, and false-heartedness of unbelievers, will then be discovered and laid open. And the apostle lets us know what an influence, the belief and consideration of this had upon himself, and other ministers of the gospel, to quicken them to diligence and faithfulness in their ministerial function. 2 Cor. v. 9, 10. We must all appear. First, all, without exception, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, ministers and people; there will be no declining or escaping of it. Secondly, all, in our own persons, without a proxy; there will be no hiring of another to appear for us, every one of us must give an account of himself to God. Rom. xiv. 12.

Now the great design of the worthy Reverend Author in these ensuing sermons, is to quicken and direct persons to prepare and make ready for this opening day. And herein he shows himself a skilful workman that needeth not be ashamed, dividing the Word of Truth aright, and giving to every one their portion. He doth not put the two-edged sword of the Spirit into a silken scabbard, and flourish it in the air; but dexterously wields it that it may reach the consciences of men: he speaks plainly, but pertinently and substantially; his words are not only intelligible, but also penetrating. And though these plain discourses are posthumous, and want the polish he was able to have given

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them, had he designed them for the press; yet they are genuine, copied from his own notes; and you have the truest character of him in the constant course of his preaching amongst his people. Some serious christians that were affected with them themselves, have desired to have them printed, that others might share in the like benefit with them. And that thy heart may be warmed, as others have been upon the reading of them, and that thou mayest be quickened and helped in this preparation for the great opening day, as it was the design of the author in preaching of them, so it is of others in the publishing of them, and of none more than of one of the meanest and unworthiest of Christ's ministers.



THE
BOOKS OPENED.

Rev. xx. 12.

And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things, which were written in the Books, according to their works.

THE Apostle Paul tells us, that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. Of this judgment to come, we have a description in this part of sacred writ, as it was showed unto Jahn in a vision; where are set forth,

1. The person of the Judge, ver. 11. who is described,

(1) By his posture, "sitting;" which is the ordinary posture of judges in the administration of justice and judgment, and a token of dominion and authority.

No. 3.

M

(2) By the place where he sat, "a great white throne." Not in a manger, as at his first coming; not on the ground, as when in flesh he dwelt amongst us; nor on a cross, as at his leaving the world, but on a great white throne.

He that lay in a manger, that stood at man's bar falsely accused, and wickedly condemned; he that hung upon the tree, shall sit supreme judge. What this throne is, or of what it shall be made, though some say the angels, others a glorious rainbow, others a bright cloud, scripture being silent you must not know of me.

(3) By his power and glory. "From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." At his first appearance, *Herod* seeking his life, he is forced to fly; Mat. ii. 14. at his second and glorious coming, heaven and earth shall flee away, not being able to abide his majesty and power.

2. The persons to be judged; ver. 12. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." The dead of all sorts and degrees. We must here include those that shall be found alive at this day, who shall pass through a change that shall be to them instead of death.

3. The form of this judgment; the manner how the judge shall proceed, viz. by books that shall be opened.

4. Sentence is passed on the parties

brought to judgment, according to what is found written in the books when thus opened. "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works."

5. The execution of this sentence; ver. 14, 15. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

The words which are the subject of the ensuing discourse, contain in them the third particular in this description, the manner of progress in this great work "the books shall be opened.

The word Book is in scripture used,

1. Properly for a volume wherein something is written, or for the things writ in that volume; Isa. xxx. 8. Luke iv. 17. Gal. iii. 10.

2: Improperly and metaphorically, for the certain knowledge and remembrance that one hath of a person or matter, and all the circumstances thereto belonging. Mal. iii. 16. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him." According to this twofold acceptation of the word, God is said to have a double book.

(1) Really, as the Bible, which is called the Book of the Lord. Isa. xxxiv. 16. Luke iv. 17. The Book containing the mind, and will, and ways of God.

(2) Metaphorically, being ascribed to him after the manner of men, who note those things in books which they would preserve the knowledge of. Thus there is a three-fold book figuratively ascribed to him, viz. 1st. the book of providence, which is the certain knowledge he hath of all persons, actions, and things, with all their circumstances. Ps. lvi. 8. and cxxxix. 16. 2dly. The book of life. Rev. xx. 12. This is the certain knowledge he hath of the elect and reprobate. 3dly. The book of universal judgment. Dan. vii. 10. We are not to understand this phrase literally, as if there should be some material books produced and opened this day. No, the Lord hath neither need nor use for them. But it must be interpreted metaphorically, as a form used for the help of our understanding; spoken;

1. By way of allusion to courts of human judicature, into which are brought, and wherein are produced charges, accusations, proofs, depositions of witnesses, confessions of parties, and all other writings that contain matter of fact relating to such causes as are to be tried.

2. To show that the judgment will be as accurate and particular in the examination and trial, and as just in the determination as if all had been recorded. Nothing shall be omitted, nor the least circumstance mistaken, but things shall be so equal in themselves; and so manifest to others, as if an exact register had been kept and then published.

From the words observe ;
That in the great day of judgment the books
shall be opened : or, there is a day com-
ing when the books shall be opened. "The
judgment was set, and the books were open-
ed, Dan. vii, 9, 10.

That this truth may be prepared for applica-
tion, it must be inquired,

I. What Books they are that shall be
opened ?

II. What the opening of these books im-
plies ?

III. Who they are these books are to be
opened about ?

IV. About what are these books to be
opened ?

I. What books are they that shall be open-
ed ? They are of three sorts, viz.

First, Those wherein all things have been
recorded, and they are,

1. *The book of divine omniscience.* Here
all things stand on record, and will hence be
as certainly known as if they had been writ in a
book : for there is not "any creature that is
not manifest in his sight ; but all things are
naked and open to the eyes of him with whom
we have to do," Heb. iv. 13. "His eyes are
upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his
goings : there is no darkness nor shadow of
death where the workers of iniquity may hide
themselves," Job. xxxiv. 21, 22. "He knows
our works," Rev. ii. 13. "There is not a

word in our tongue, but lo, he knows it, Ps. cxxxix. 4. Here are our thoughts writ: "Thou understandest my thoughts afar off," v. 3. "No thought can be withholden from thee," Job xlvi. 2. Here are the hearts described: 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." The Lord knows, and remembers all the actions, thoughts and words of all men, and shall make it appear at this day, that he doth so as fully and plainly as if he had kept a diary from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, and therein writ in order every particular action of every individual man and woman. O remember this, God sees thee always, he can tell all that thou doest; and this book wherein all is written shall one day be opened!

2. *The book of conscience*, this carries all our actions in it; it is a great volume in which all we do is written. Austin takes that other book mentioned in the text to be the book of conscience, which is the book of each man's life, wherein all the passages thereof are recorded. Though this interpretation agree not with this place, yet conscience is such a book as he here describes: whithersoever thou goest, where-ever thou art, thy conscience is always with thee, carrying in it whatever thou puttest therein, whether good or bad. Conscience is not always speaking, nor always chiding, many have silenced it, but it is always writing; when we are at our tables, when on our beds, when we

are alone or in company it keeps an exact account ; and this book also shall be opened.

Secondly, The Books shall then be opened, whereby all things shall be clearly discovered and attested. These are,

1. *The book of divine omniscience.* As all things are inclosed herein, so this shall then be opened, and all the things contained in it thereby disclosed. He will by the opening of this make manifest to all, that which is now hid from men and angels, and only known to himself. God knows all things, and will make all men know that he doth so, by setting in order before their eyes all things at this day ; Ps. L. 21.

2. *The book of conscience.* Herein all things are written ; and by the opening hereof shall appear, In this day conscience shall be enlightened and awakened, memories shall be roused and strengthened, all past things shall appear new, and come in afresh upon the minds of men. Then every thought of thy heart, every word of thy mouth, every action of thy life with the circumstances thereof ; then every day of grace, and how thou hast spent it, every opportunity of doing and getting good, and how thou hast improved it, shall come in as new as that which thou didst the last day or hour. Yea, the things that are now gone from thee, (as Nebuchadnezzar's dream from him) and that thou hast forgotten what they were at such a time, in such a place, among such company, forty or fifty years ago, these shall

come in and be as lively presented to thy view, as when newly acted. O think on this! It is a common saying, that conscience is a thousand witnesses: you carry this witness in your own bosoms; which when the opening day comes, will proclaim all as on the house-top.

3. *The book of satan's accusations*; he is called the accuser, Rev. xii. 10. This is one part of his business now, but he will especially appear to be so when he at the great day shall come with his register wherein he now inserts our actions.

There is a relation of a demon that appeared at *Mascon in France*, in the house of a godly minister, who there spoke and acted many things, among which there are these two remarkable stories.

One time the demon speaking profanely, a grave divine then present religiously rebuked him; to whom he answered, minister, you are very holy and serious in this company, you were not so when singing such a bawdy song in such a tavern, which the demon rehearsed before the company. This the divine confessed he did in his youth; yet when he had forgot it, and perhaps forgot that ever he sung it, the devil readily remembers it as if but done that day. The other is of a lawyer who came out of curiosity, and would urge several questions, which when the demon had answered, he further adds, now, sir, I have told you what you demanded, I must next tell you what you demand not, and then discovered many of his un-

equal dealings, which made him appear to be a dishonest man. The devil is a busybody, present at our tables, at our recreations, with us in the shop, in the market, and field, with us in solemn assemblies, with us when engaged in private and secret duties, ever spying and listening to see and hear what we do or say: no place is so secret, we cannot act so privately but his piercing eye will find us out, and he hath a sure memory which will not permit any thing we do to pass into oblivion; he will certainly when this opening day comes, produce such a catalogue of sinners' works as they little think of; he will bring his bill of their ways, as the patriarchs brought Joseph's coat to Jacob, saying, is not this the coat of thy son? so is not this, sinners, the coat of your christian profession which you have here spotted with oaths, there with drunkenness, in another place with uncleanness, and all over with various transgressions?

4. *The book of human testimony*, or sinners' mutual accusations. Now many husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, are leading one another into temptations. Then they shall accuse and witness against each other, as our Saviour says in another case, Luke xii. 52, 53. "The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother." So at this great day, "a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Mat. x. 36. Parents

shall rise against their own children, children shall rise against their parents; then masters shall witness against their servants, and servants against their masters. O the cries, the complaints that will be of husbands, wives, children, servants, of the same house against each other! "A young man going to execution, desired to speak with his mother in the ear, but instead of whispering bit off her ear, complaining of her as the promoter of his death, because she did not in his youth chastise him for his faults, but by her fond indulgence imboldened him in his wickedness." Thus at the opening day children will appear against their parents; Lord, these parents were instrumental to bring me into the world, but they were also my soul's murderers, training me up in ignorance, teaching me by their example to lie, swear, and steal, and suffering me to be vile and profane. Parents will at the great assizes appear against children; Lord, this child was stubborn, rebellious, untractable. Servants shall give testimony against masters, Lord, we were so long in such a family, but never saw any thing of religion in it; we sat down, and rose up from our tables like brutes, we never knew what it was to have the doors shut in the evening, nor opened in the morning with the key of prayer, and reading of the scriptures. "Thus, thus" says one "I have in my own house, accusers, witnesses, judges, and tormentors!" When you are tempted to sin by relations and neighbours,

say as the man to *Joab*, when reproved for not killing *Absalom*. 2 Sam. xviii. 11, 12, 13. "There is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me." So the King, even the King of kings, hath commanded that we abstain from sin and from the appearance of evil; and if I should break his command, it cannot be hid from his omniscient eye; nay, you who now tempt, will in the great day accuse me.

5. *The book of the creature.* It is said of the wicked man; Job xx. 27. "That the heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him." All the creatures shall by their common testimony disclose his wickedness: ver. 28. "The increase of his house shall depart." The vulgate renders it, the branch of his house shall be opened. Upon which *Sanctius*, making these words explicatory of the foregoing verse, thus glosses; "The heaven and the earth shall reveal his iniquities, by discovering whence, how and by what means his branch hath grown, his increase hath come; by what frauds, oaths, and oppression the furniture of his house was compassed, that this came by lies, and that by wronging others." Thus though he mistakes the text, he gives us a gloss which is in itself solid. The prophet tells us, Hab. ii. 11. "That the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." The very materials of those state-ly palaces, or whatever houses are built by

cheating, or possessed by violence, as they call to heaven for vengeance, being procured by injustice; so they shall unitedly witness against their electors or owners; the stones of such walls will cry, "Lord, we were laid here by violence;" the beams shall answer, "we were laid here by fraud." They are not a few who now live in curious houses, that will be dreadful witnesses against them at this opening day. Says the apostle *James*, Chap. v. 3. "Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust thereof shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." This will be brought as an evidence of your covetousness, and will beget in you such stinging reflections as shall gnaw upon you with anguish and torment. Ver. 4. "And behold the hire of your labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth, and the cries of them who have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." One observes that the same word in the Hebrew, signifies both a wedge of gold, and a tongue; and some say that *Achan's* wedge had the shape of a tongue. surely gold, wealth, and estates ill got, will have many tongues, and cry aloud at the great day of opening the books. Then the corrupt judge will hear of his bribes and perverting justice; then the unjust lawyer's estate will cry against him; then the possessions of oppressing landlords will declare that they were got by racking poor tenants; then it will be the

language of the full bags of idle ministers, that they were filled by starving immortal souls ; then the treasures of covetous mammonists will acknowledge themselves to be the products of usury, oppression. &c.

6. *The book of the Talents wherewith men are intrusted*, shall be opened at this opening day, and these when opened will bring to light all the days, means, advantages, and opportunities of grace that men have had ; all the truths, and duties that have been preached to, and pressed on them ; what pains have been taken, and how much done that they might be saved. One observes that God is very curious in scripture to record the time how long his faithful servants lived on the earth ; and says he, among other reasons this is not the least, to convince us that he intends to reckon with those who lived with them, for every year, yea, day and hour they had them amongst them ; they shall know they had a prophet, a husband, a parent, a master that was godly, and that they had them so long, and God will know of them what use they made of them. Another observes that the year and month, and day, when the word of the Lord came to the prophets, stands upon record in sacred writ, as Ezek. i. 1. 2. to teach us that all our betrustments with all their circumstances are now recorded, and will at this day be made manifest. Then will be declared the year, the month, the day, when such a sermon was preached, such a truth urged, when such

a minister was sent with the Lord's message among you. In this opening day, ministers will open their mouths, we preached so long to you; sabbath and sermons will speak, we were continued so long to you; prayers will witness that they were put up for you so often to the throne of grace; truths, now imprisoned then shall speak: yea, the dust shaken off from the feet of those ministers you despise and will not hear, shall speak against you, Mark. vi. 11.

Thirdly, The books shall then be opened, whereby all things shall be examined, tried, and judged.

As in earthly courts when matters of fact are opened and proved, then the statutes are also produced, and sentence is past on such matters according to the determination of the law. So at the great tribunal when the books of record, the books of evidence and proof are opened, then shall also be opened the law whereby matters shall be finally adjudicated, and this is the holy scripture. The holy bible being the law-book of the great King, is now the rule of our lives, and shall be the rule of judgment at the opening day. Christ himself, who is the judge, tells us, John xii. 48. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." This the apostle Paul witnesses, Rom. ii. 16. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." Who shall judge?

God: What shall lie judge? The secrets of men; not only their outward actions which are manifest to all, but their most hidden sins, and secret duties, their inward purposes, designs, and aims: By whom? By Jesus Christ: By what rule? According to my gospel; the gospel committed to, and preached by me; men shall be judged according to their works, their works by this word. The final sentence passed at this day, shall be but a more solemn and manifest declaration of that judgment which the Lord hath in his written law already passed upon men; that which is now said shall then be done. Now the word says, he that "believeth on him shall have everlasting life." John iii. 16. Then believers shall be crowned with a crown of life. Now the word says, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." I Cor. 6. 9. Then the wicked shall be turned into hell. Look what sentence this law now passes on thee, the same will Christ pronounce in this day; for this is the book that must be opened, and by it he will proceed in giving judgment. Thus you see what books are to be opened.

II. The next thing to be considered is, what the Opening of the books implies? and it doth denote,

I. *A manifestation of men's works*;—that they shall come to light. While a book is shut we are ignorant what is in it, but when it is open every one may see and know what

is writ therein. So many of men's works, both good and bad, are like a clasped or sealed book, secret and unknown; but in this day they shall be like a book open, legible to every one. 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Therefore judge nothing before the time come, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will manifest the counsels of the heart." When the Lord comes, he will make great discoveries, and bring to light things that are now secret. "Some men's sins," says the apostle, 1 Tim. v. 24, 25. "are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. Though these verses are taken to have another meaning, yet I may, as some do, make this gloss on them, i. e. Some men's sins are open, notorious, appear to all now in this life, they show their sin as *Sodom*; and some men's sins they are kept secret to the day of judgment, there is no noise heard, no notice taken of them in the world, but these follow after, to be opened at this day. Likewise the good works of some are evident, cannot be denied; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid, i. e. those good things in the saints that are not manifest, but are either concealed by themselves, or mistaken and misrepresented by others, shall come to light; secret duties shall come abroad, wronged innocence and integrity shall be cleared. This is the first thing this

opening imports, a discovery of men's doings a manifestation of their works; this shall be done by the opening of the books of record.

2. *A testification of the works manifested,* that they shall not only come abroad, but also be so fully evidenced, and clearly proved, that no man shall be able to deny any part thereof. Sometimes in men's courts, the prisoner at the bar denies the matter of fact that he is charged with, pleads not guilty, and stands upon his own justification; but when witnesses come in one after another, and depose plainly, positively, punctually, and directly against him, bringing undeniable evidence, then he is forced to confess. Thus now many are ready to deny their deeds of darkness; but so many witnesses shall come in at this day, and with such evidence as will force confessions. O sirs, the secrets of sinners shall be so fully witnessed, attested, and proved, that they shall confess: and the saints that have been slandered, aspersed, defamed, and wronged, shall have their innocence so fully evidenced that the world shall see it and be satisfied. This is a second thing this opening implies, viz. That all matters shall be found and fully made out as they are in themselves, with their several circumstances, which will be done by the opening of the books whereby all things shall be discovered.

3. *A determination or judgment to be passed on the works of men thus manifested and made out;*—that there shall be a final determin-

ing, and definitive sentence passed on them. This is another thing ; this opening is an opening to pass sentence, as judges after full trial open and read the sentence out of a book ; an opening to absolve or condemn, therefore it follows immediately in the words, "the dead were judged," that is, sentence was passed on them.

III. You have seen What Books shall be opened, and What the opening of them implies ; the next inquiry may be this, About whom must they be opened ?

To this, I say, they shall be opened about all men universally, the whole offspring descending from *Adam* by ordinary generation, without exception. This will appear,

1. *From the universality of scripture assertions in this present case.* The scripture speaking of this, brings in all men. Rom. xiv. 10, 11. "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." What doth the apostle hence infer ? Ver. 12. "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. 2 Cor. v. 10. All nations. Mat. xxv. 32. "Before him shall be gathered all nations." Not a few persons, but whole nations ; not a few nations, but all nations. All the world. Acts xvii. 31. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." Observe here is a

day appointed, the end for which it was appointed, to judge; the object of this judgment, the world, the whole world; whosoever is of the world shall come to this opening day.

2. From the special distribution the scriptures make in this case, distributing the parties that are to come to this opening; 1. Into quick and dead; therefore Christ is stiled the judge of quick and dead. Acts x. 42, 2 Tim. iv. 1. 2. Into great and small, Rev. xx. 12. The king, and the beggar, the rich, and the poor, the old and the young; they that have been so high that they have judged others, and they that have been so low that their judgment hath been taken away. 3. Into good and bad, Eccles. iii. 16, 17. Solomon there reports what he saw practised in the place of justice and judgment. He saw their public injustice, the good oppressed, the bad exalted. Upon which he communicates his thoughts, or that which was his comfort against these unjust, unequal dealings of men; and it was this, that God would have a day of judging all men, and all things over again. "I said in my heart," I comforted myself in this, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there," where? why, with God before his tribunal, "for every purpose and for every work," Ver. 17. Thus God shall judge the righteous with a judgment of discussion and approbation; the wicked with a judgment of discussion and condemnation; the persons that must come to this opening are thus distinguished.

Now all men come under one of these ranks, either they are great or small, good or bad, therefore all shall be judged.

IV. Now you have seen about Whom ; the next thing to be considered is, about What they are to be opened ; what things they are that the books shall discover, evidence, and determine when opened.

These are the actions of men, the works, words, and thoughts of men. Take for this but these two scriptures. The one is Eccles. xii. 14. where the things to be brought to judgment are described ; generally, "every work ;" none shall escape, be permitted or passed by, each one shall come in its place ; for there is a time for every work. Particularly in regard of their manner, every open work shall come in, none of these shall escape, no, not an idle word, Mat. xii. 36. Every secret work ; "the secrets of men shall God then judge by Jesus Christ." Rom. ii. 16. Of their matter, every good work shall come in; the feeding of Christ in his hungry, the clothing of him in his naked, the harbouring him in his desolate, the visiting him in his sick members : and every evil work, not an ungodly word nor hard speech shall pass, Jude 15.

The other is 2 Cor. v. 10. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The things to be brought in, are the things done in the body,

which is to be understood not exclusively as if external actions only should appear, but extensively as including every thing we do while in the flesh, whether internal, even the naked thoughts, or external, words and actions.

Though I desire as much as I may to decline matters of controversy, yet here comes in a query that I cannot well pass over in silence; it is this, viz. Whether the sins of the saints shall be laid open and manifested at this day? Or whether the books when opened shall open the sins of the people of God, as well as the sins of the wicked? It is a question agitated among the learned; some maintain the affirmative, and say, they shall be made known: others are for the negative, and say, they shall not be manifested. I will only premise these three or four things, and with submission give my thoughts about it in short. The sins of the godly shall not be opened,

(1.) To their condemnation; our Saviour himself says, John. v. 24. "Verily, verily! I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." "There is," says the apostle, "no condemnation to those who are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. viii. 1. Nor yet,

(2.) To their shame and reproach: they shall not be produced to their infamy or disgrace. Sinners rise to everlasting shame and

contempt, but saints to glory, Dan. xii. 2. They may lift up their face and "have boldness in the day of judgment." 1 John iv. 17. Nor,

(3.) To the abatement of their joy in that day. The appearance of their sins in that day of the Lord shall no more abate their joy, than the appearing of the dead carcases of the *Egyptians* on the sea-shore did the joy of the delivered *Israelites*. Neither,

(4.) To the damping or diminishing of their love to the Lord. If the woman to whom many sins were forgiven loved much, Luke vii. 47. then the saints shall not love God less, when they see how much hath been forgiven them.

Now these things being thus premised, I say, I conceive it is probable that the sins of the saints shall be opened at this opening. I will give you my grounds for it, and leave it to that day that will fully open this and other things yet in the dark.

(1.) Because the expressions concerning the objects of this opening are universal. The personal objects are thus spoken of. Rom. xiv. 10. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of God." The real objects are expressed in the same terms of universality, every thing, whether open or secret; every work, whether good or evil; Eccles. xii. 14. every man, and every thing of every man is to come to this opening day, 2 Cor. v. 10.

(2.) Because there is such a mixture of the sins of many wicked and godly men, that

the sins of the wicked cannot be disclosed with their several circumstances, and the sins of the godly remain closed, but if the one come fully out, the other must. Those who are for the negative, think the strength of the former argument is fully discharged by this distinction, that the terms and notes of universality in the places mentioned are not to be taken collectively, as asserting that the sins of the godly as well as ungodly shall be manifested, but distributively, thus, that the good works only of the good, and the evil works of the wicked, shall be manifest. But this key will not, for ought I see, fit all the wards of that lock. Yet they confess, that all the works of wicked men shall be proclaimed. Now many sins of wicked and godly men lie so mingled together, and are so concatenated several ways, that it is not easy to conceive how the sins of the wicked can be laid open, and the other not come out too. It is sure a gross abuse of scripture, and a great sin in wicked men to justify and harden themselves, as many have done in drunkenness, by the example of *Noah*; in their customary oaths, by the example of *Joseph*; in uncleanness by the example of *David*: but how can these sins come out, and the sin of *Noah*, *Joseph*, and *David*, not be made known? It was a sin in the high-priest to grant letters of persecution to *Saul*, Acts. ix. 1, 2. Yet how can these letters be produced, but it will appear that *Saul* was once a persecutor? I will suppose thee who

art now a convert to have been, when unregenerate, guilty of folly and lewdness with such a man or woman, and the person with whom thou didst commit it to have died in an impenitent state; how can that party's folly be exposed, and thine with whom it was committed lie hid?

(3.) Because the blotting out of sin is referred to this opening day. Acts. iii. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord." Here you have a duty proposed and pressed, "repent." A motive annexed, taken from the profitable consequent, "that your sins may be blotted out." The time when this benefit is to be received and enjoyed, "when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord;" at this opening day. The scriptures speak of a blotting out of sins at that day, not but that the saints enjoy a real blotting out of sin before that day; not that their pardon of any sin is not plenary, but imperfect, having part of its guilt remaining then to be done away: but the meaning is, that then they shall solemnly, openly, and publicly before men and angels be cleared from every charge of all accusing adversaries, and their absolution proclaimed before the world.

Now this blotting out implies some appearance of the sins from which they shall then be solemnly acquitted. This may be the mean-

ing of that, Mat. xii. 32. "It shall not be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come; i. e. An act of pardon shall neither now be really passed, nor then solemnly proclaimed, and by his declaratory sentence ratified. Sins that have been blotted out intentionally from eternity in the decree of God, and virtually from the passion and resurrection of Christ by his satisfaction, and formally or actually in themselves from their union to Christ, shall in this opening day be publicly and solemnly blotted out to all eternity.

(4.) Because this seems to make much for the illustration and exaltation of the grace and glory of Christ, 2 Thes. i. 10. to manifest the glorious effects of his passion and satisfaction: when it appears what sins, how many, and how various have been laid at their door, the love, passion, and merits of Christ will be more elevated, glory and honour will redound on Christ; then it shall appear what strength was in his love, what value in his blood. I might yet further urge the opening of the books; the impartial manifestation of the sins of saints as well as others in the holy scriptures; the dangerous tendency of the contrary tenet; the aggravation it will be to the horror and sting of the reprobate, when they see others, that have sinned alike in some things, admitted to glory, and themselves for their unbelief and impenitence shut out. But the fore-mentioned are the arguments that sway most with me in this case.

Now what remains, but that we apply this truth, thus explained, in those Uses that it gives us, which are of—Information,—Reproof,—and Exhortation?

First, Of Information: shall the books be opened? Then we may hence learn:

1. *That all our actions are of a lasting nature.* These die not in the birth, but are abiding and for many days to come. There are many things in this life which as to the acting of them are transient and soon over, yet are durable in regard of their issue. A lease is written over in two or three hours, yet the concernment of it may be for many years, yea for some lives. So it is with our thoughts, words, and actions, they do not die as soon as they are past, but are as seeds which are sown in time, and come up in eternity. There are books of remembrance, all is put on record that we do, and is in a sort eternal. Says one, every thought we think is eternal, every word we speak is eternal, every work is eternal, none of these but shall live to this opening day. O remember this sirs! Your actions pass not away, all that you do to-day, all that you shall do to-morrow, will remain till the day of judgment. All that in any place, on any account, in any company, proceeds from you, will tarry till this day come.

2. *That all our actions must come to light:* they are not only lasting, but shall be opened. All those things that have been covered in darkness, that men have acted under a cloak,

that no eye but that which is all-seeing ever saw, shall come abroad. I remember a story of *Ottochus* king of *Bohemia*, who refused to do homage to the Emperor, till at last chastised with war, he was content to do it privately in a tent, which tent was so contrived by the Emperor's servants, that by drawing one cord it was all taken away, and so the King was presented on his knees doing homage to him in the view of three armies then present. That which he thought to have kept covered, was manifested before a great number of persons. Thus will God at this day uncase and lay open men's doings. There are many who care not what they do, so they can but do it secretly. O but this cover shall be taken from off them, and they represented as doing such and such things before armies, not only of men but angels, "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed : and hid, that shall not be known, and come abroad."

Mat. x. 26. Luke viii. 17. "Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light ; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops." Luke xii. 13. Your most secret talk and communion one with another shall be made public. All the hypocrisy of men shall be brought out; all their guile and fraud; all their force and violence they have used in their dealings shall appear; all their by-ends they have had in any action; all their vile and abominable practices, of which I may

say as the apostle, Eph. v. 12, It is a shame to mention them ; even these that it is a shame for christians to speak of, shall be seen to their eternal shame that have done them. As the Lord by *Nathan* said to *David*. 2 Sam. xii. 12. "Thou didst it secretly ; but I will do this thing before all *Israel*, and before the sun." So may I say, you do this or that secretly, but the Lord will make it openly known.

3. *That we must meet all our works again.* All that ever we do in the body now, we shall meet in the books then. The things that now slip away from us, and we see them no more, will come again into our sight when the books are opened. Historians tell us of some rivers which, after they have run some space, fall under ground, and cannot be seen, but after many miles running in the bowels of the earth, they break up again, into a great stream. Thus the river *Ana*, in *Spain* burieh itself, and runneth under ground fifteen miles, and then comes up again, whereupon the *Spaniards* boast they have a bridge on which ten thousand cattle feed daily. So there are many things we do which are no sooner done, than we forget them, they pass out of our sight as waters, buried under the earth. But every one of these after they have been a long time hid, will come up again, Sirs, all that we do in this will meet us in the world to come. Our sabbaths, our duties, our works, will meet us, yea, our thoughts and words, will meet us. Art thou a God-

fearing man or woman? All thy goodness shall meet thee; not a prayer, a tear, a sigh shall be missing, nor any thing that thou hast done or suffered for God. Art thou a person working iniquity? Thy works first and last, thy old and new-done deeds will meet thee. Perhaps now thy deeds of darkness lie all asleep, and make no noise in thy conscience. O, but at this day of opening, these sleepy lions will awake and roar upon thee. Thy oaths, thy lies, thy drunkenness, thy worldliness, all thy sins will then stare thee in the face as so many ghosts.

4. *That we have need to be circumspect and careful what we do at all times, and how we carry in our generation, for there are many notaries about us continually.* God, as I may say, is ever writing, conscience is ever writing, devils and creatures are ever writing. Nothing that we do escapes their books, they take all at length to the last and least circumstance of every action and work: what manner of persons then ought we to be? Chronologists tell us of some kings, that though otherwise they would have taken more liberty, yet they have been circumspect in their actions, because they knew what they did would be registered and transmitted to posterity. Did this so influence them? What circumspection should it beget in us, when we seriously consider that all we do will be registered by many hands, and certainly transmitted to posterity, and not only so, but to this

great opening day, where it shall be opened to all generations that have gone before, or shall come after us to the end of the world? O think of it! It is said of *Apelles* the famous painter, that he carried on his work very leisurely: and being asked why he was so deliberate and curious, his answer was; "I am long in painting, because what I paint I paint for eternity." I am thus exact because not only the present, but many ages to come are to look on and judge my work. Thus sirs, many eyes, and many ages to come are to look on and judge our daily works and ways, and all the passages of our lives. O therefore let this teach us to live for an opening day; to be careful nothing now be writ but what we would have read then by the whole world of angels and men!

5. *That this opening day will be a great day.* It will be a great thing to see all mankind meeting together; all that ever have been, are, or shall be over the face of the whole earth, standing in one company before the supreme judge. O, but will it not be much more to see all the doings of all men laid open? The secrets that have been hid from ages, and from generations, now made manifest! All the things that have been done in darkness, and covered with as much darkness as that wherein they were committed! O what, what a day will this be! And what will many appear to be when the books are opened, and all the passages of their lives ma-

nifested? O what heaps, as I may say; will there be here of oaths, there of lies, there of idle words, there of frauds; sabbaths profaned, sermons slighted, and of numberless sins of all sorts that sinners have laid at their own doors, and died impenitent in! Yea, what will many be found when the books are opened, who have said well, seemed well, done many things, and after all gone out of this world with the applause of men? Surely many who can now say much, speak of God, and breathe out good, will then be found others than at present they are taken to be. Secret hypocrisy, secret worldliness, secret estrangement from the truth and power of godliness, will then be found where now there is, little suspicion of them. O that you would think of this, and see that you be *Nathaniels* indeed. There is in the life of *Bruno*, author of the Carthusian Friars, a relation of a great doctor, his fellow-professor, a man highly reputed in those times both for piety and learning, who being dead, when they brought him to the church to be buried, as they were about the funeral rites, the dead corpse suddenly sat up upon the bier, and cried out, "I am accused by the righteous judgment of God;" at which the people ran away amazed. The next day they came again to inter the corpse, and as they were about the service, it rose again and cried with a lamentable voice, "I am judged by the righteous judgment of God." The third day almost

all the city came together ; and again it rose up and with a doleful noise cried, "I am condemned by the righteous judgment of God." That this was true I shall not assert ; but certainly when the opening day comes, many will be found in this case, many that have died in great repute for piety, and holiness, will then stand accused, judged and condemned. Many a face of wickedness will then be unmasked that hath been covered with a vail of dissimulation ; many an unsound heart will come out that hath been cloaked under specious performances ; many a glorious professor will then be found a gilded sepulchre. Sirs, look to, and see that you be altogether christians, for these books will open all, and open that which will exclude many from the kingdom of heaven who have been great preachers, great professors, that have known much, done much, gone far, and been well thought of by all round about them.

6. *That it will then be in vain for men to seek a cover for their sins.* Our first parents had no sooner sinned but they were for hiding it, and this is natural to us their posterity. Job xxiv. 15. "The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, no eye shall see me." When David that good man had fallen into the foul sin of uncleanness, you cannot, if you read the history, 2 Sam. xi. be ignorant what means he used to hide it. This is very usual, therefore says Job xxxi. 33. "If I covered my transgression as

Adam," i. e. say some, as our first father did, seeking to cloak his transgression : or as *Adam*, i. e. say others, as man, as man uses to do, or after the manner of men. But alas, this is a most vain practice, for sin cannot be covered from the eye of God now ; "for there is no darkness, neither shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Job xxxiv. 22. For "he setteth their iniquities before him, their secret sins in the light of his countenance." Ps. xc. 8. Nor shall they at last be hid from men and angels. This will be one special work, and end of this opening to bring all secrets, to light, to manifest the counsels of the heart. Of all sins these shall not be covered, it is a day appointed for the openings of these, therefore says the apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness." Why will God then judge them? The meaning is not, that God exempts them from the punishment of earthly magistrates, reserving them wholly to his own judgment, but it is because such sins are commonly so secretly committed, that the magistrate cannot, or so slightly looked on, that he will not punish them; therefore God will at that day judge both those things which have now been wrong judged, and those which have not been judged at all. It is in vain then to expect your sins shall be covered, let not hopes of secrecy embolden you to meddle with iniquity.

This opening will open secrets, and these will bring most shaine on you, and do most harm to you. There have been many strange discoveries of secret wickedness in the world. Is is storied of one *Bessus*, that having killed his father, he was so pursued with a guilty conscience, that he thought the swallows as they flew about in their chatter said, *Bessus hath killed his father*; whereupon he confessed the fact.

7. *That shame shall come upon sinners at this day.* Dan. xii. 2. What the Lord speaks of *Nineveh*, that will he do to all the sons and daughters of wickedness at this day. Nahum iii. 5, 6. "He will discover their skirts upon their face, and will show the nations their nakedness, and the kingdoms their shame; he will cast abominable filth upon them, and make them vile, and will set them as a gazing stock." O think of this opening, and what shame it will lay on you who go on in your iniquities! Alas, were many of our doings discovered now to a small assembly of people, how could we face them? Surely it would make many to look with faces like death. How will it be then in this great day, when all must be brought forth not in a corner before a handful, but in an open place before a world?

8. *The terror and astonishment that shall at this day fall upon sinners.* As it is said of the morning, that it is to secret sinners "even as the shadow of death," Job xxiv. 17. So I

may say, this opening will be to them as the terrors of the shadow of death. They shall not only, as the thief, be ashamed when he is found, but they shall be made a very *Magor-missabib*. As the king of *Babylon*, when he saw the hand-writing on the wall, Dan. v. 5, 6. So they, when they shall see the books opened, and what they have written in them, their countenances will be changed, and their thoughts troubled. O sirs, it cannot now be conceived what horror will then fall on ungodly men. Have you ever seen poor malefactors going with death in their faces to the bar where they knew that capital crimes would be charged on, and undeniably proved against them? The sight of these poor, pale, trembling, dispirited creatures was nothing to that which shall be seen at this opening of the books. When poor sinners are come to this, to have all laid open, and can neither deny any thing they have done, nor excuse it, nor appeal to a higher bar, what a pitiful taking will they be in! O that this might be thought on now in time before it be too late!

9. *That we have need to take care how we close up our days and die; for as we leave the books at death, just so we shall find them at this great day of judgment, when they must be opened.* "In what state our last day finds us, in that will the last day of the world finds us, for such as we die in that day, such we shall be judged in this. Such as we

go hence, such we shall be presented before God's tribunal." He that goeth hence in his sins shall be found in them. Learn hence therefore to take heed how you venture on death, what you leave written in the books at your leaving the world. You would not die in debt, leave bills and bonds behind you that may trouble your posterity when you are gone. Beware of dying impenitent, of leaving sin on the score ; for this will, if so left, trouble you another day, and undo you for ever.

10. *That it is a blessed thing to be a pardoned sinner, to have sin pardoned.* O this is a choice favour. David marks the man thus privileged, for the happy man ; he doth not ascribe blessedness to the rich, to the honourable, and mighty of this world. It is not he that hath health, riches, honour, and friends, that is blessed because he hath them ; but blessed is the man "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Ps. xxxii. 1. That this is such a blessed thing, such a signal mercy, you may see from this truth now under consideration. The books must be opened : will it not then be a sweet, a blessed thing at this opening to find our sins blotted out, to see a red line of Christ's blood drawn over them from end to end, so as we may still see the sum we were indebted in, but see it cancelled never to be expected ? Thus it shall be with true penitents at this time ; when others shall find all to be answered for, they shall see their sins as the poor man sees his

debts in the creditor's book, when either forgiven or paid, viz. crossed out, and never to be charged on him again; thus they shall see all blotted out. And will not this be a blessed privilege? Verily it will. I remember *Austin* in his confessions mentions it as a sweet mercy that he could look the sins of his unconverted state in the face and not be afraid. Says he, "what shall I render unto the Lord, that my memory can recollect these, and not be afraid?" Truly, sirs, it is not now fully known, nor shall before the opening day, what a great happiness it will then be to be able to look on our sins and not tremble, to look on them and not be at our wits end because of them, as ungodly sinners will then be, to whom it will be a greater terror to meet their sins, than now it is to meet so many roaring lions.

Second Use is of Reproof to those,

1. *Who never think of this day, nor how it shall then be with them.* This is the case of many secure and careless ones, who drive on in a state and way of sin from day to day, and take no thought about this opening that is coming upon them. It was once the complaint of a good man, "akas, what do I mean? I eat, I drink, I play, I sleep, as if I had gone behind death, and passed over the day of judgment." It may be more sadly complained of many, that they act as if there were no such day to come, as if there never should be any opening again of the things done in

the body ; they take not this into their thoughts. Many readily embrace *Solomon's* ironical concession, Eccles. xi. 9, but they as willingly forget his serious admonition : "But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." This they have no mind to remember. Art thou of this sort of persons ? Dost thou never think of this day ? Is it a matter that hath no room in thy present thoughts ? There is such a day coming, the books shall be opened wherein all that you are doing day after day is recorded, shall be discovered, and tried, and there shall be a manifestation, testification, and determination of all. You see this, and will you forget it ? What madness is it, and how sad is it that you should not consider this ! *Austin* compares such careless persons to them who awake out of a lethargy, and fall into a phrensy. And truly if you go on at this rate, this day will overtake you unawares, and then you are sure to be awaked ; awaked out of this lethargy of security, and thence suddenly to pass into a phrensy of everlasting horror and astonishment. As it was in the days of *Noah*, they were secure, and knew not till the flood came ; *Noah* had preached it to them, prepared the ark before them, yet they took no notice of it ; knowing they would not know till destruction came suddenly on them. So shall it be in the day of the Son of Man, Mat. xxiv. 38, 39. This opening will come on sinners when they think not

on it; and how sad will it be to see all this on a sudden, when there will be no way to escape, nor time to prepare! O think on this, and let it at last put you on thinking that there is an opening day to come!

2. *To them who from day to day live in sin and ungodliness.* They are not a few who are workers of iniquity, that drive a trade of sin; how many may we meet with in every place; and among all ranks of persons that are plodding on in a course of vice! Open profanity is become very common in these days. O the profaneness, the profaneness, the prevailing profaneness of our towns and congregations! who can look out with an eye but half open, and not see iniquity abounding? which way can you turn and not behold those persons who "drink in sin like water," Job xv. 16; who "do evil with both hands," Mich. vii. 3; and "weary themselves to commit iniquity?" Jer. ix. 5. Debauchery is become a piece of gallantry, and intemperance a part of religion; and open looseness, an ordinary practice with very many. Thus there are many every day filling the books with pride, oaths, lies, drunkenness, uncleanness, oppression, profaning of the Lord's day; and many strange abominations. But this truth brings sad news to all these if they would open their ear to hear it; it tells them that there is an opening day coming, wherein all these things must be opened again, and accounted for. Consider it; art thou an intemperate person, living in excess and

following strong drink? Or a customary swearer, filling thy mouth with cursing, or bitterness? Art thou a filthy adulterer, or fornicator, committing folly, and sinning against thy own body? Art thou a griping oppressor, who enrichest thyself by making a gain of the necessity or simplicity of others, and bringing the spoil of the poor into thy house? Art thou a fraudulent person, reaching at all thou canst come by, be it by right or wrong, never standing to make use of oaths and lies, sinful subtleties, and secret tricks in thy trade, or sleights in thy dealings, so that thou mayest, but hook in something thereby, to thyself? Or art thou a man or woman living in the practice of any other manifest and open, or secret and hidden sin and ungodliness? This truth comes with astonishing tidings to thee. Consider it you that are of this sort of persons, either you are atheists, or mad, wholly beside yourselves. Are you not atheists? do you indeed believe this, that there will be an opening of the books, and that such an opening as will lay all open? Then surely you are distracted; for how can it otherwise be? How is it possible that men believing such a day as this, if not beside themselves, should live so profanely, since thereby they prepare themselves to be then unavoidably and eternally destroyed? Can this be imagined to be the work of any but distracted persons? certainly it cannot. How wise soever you may be in your own eyes, or in

the eyes of others like yourselves, yet these are the ways of men void of understanding; Therefore knowing the terrors of the Lord, how tremendous this judgment will be, and what a terrible time it will be with the ungodly; I would earnestly beseech and beg of you to take these things into your serious thoughts, that you may think of repenting and turning to God. To excite you to this, consider,

(1.) God hath revealed his wrath from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men in his threatenings, backed with many sad examples in all cases, which are exposed to your view, and left for your warning.. You are plainly told, that God "will by no means clear the guilty," Exod. xxxiv. 7. That "the foolish," i.e. wicked persons "shall not stand in his sight," Ps. v. 5. That "destruction is to the wicked," Job xxxi. 3. That "the wicked shall be turned into Hell," Ps. ix. 17, "That the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God," 1. Cor. vi. 9. "The angels that kept not their first state, are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, to the judgment of the great day." The old world did for sin suffer a deluge; for this Sodom and Gomorrah were reduced to ashes; Israel were overthrown in the wilderness, and many such sad instances there are set forth to those who after should live ungodly; and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Sirs, there is no way of iniquity but you may find a word of woe and

sweetness that thou canst have in thy sin, if thou mightest live in it a thousand years, is not able to recompense thee for the horror that this sight will put thy soul into; nay, if thou didst but see one sin now, as thou shall then see all, thou wouldest not choose to continue in sin for the gaining of ten thousand worlds.

(5.) That you must have all that is in these books, all your deeds of darkness, and works of iniquity laid open before God, angels, and men. As you cannot hide yourselves, so you cannot hide any of your sins. I would have you consider, this day there will be no hiding of wickedness. No question but as men will be for crying to the mountains and rocks to hide themselves, so they will be seeking where to hide their sins that they may not come to light. A cruel *Cain* will then be for hiding his brother's blood; a covetous *Achan* for hiding his golden wedge; an oppressing *Ahab* for hiding his *Naboth's* vineyard; a drunken *Nabal* for hiding his vomit; the filthy fornicator for hiding his uncleanness. O where, where will one cry, may I hide my gain of oppression? Where, will another say, may I now hide my tricks and sleights that I raised my estate by? Where, will a third cry, may I now hide my lies and oaths? O where may I hide my profaned sabbaths, mis-spent time of grace, abused seasons of salvation? Where may I hide this sermon, and that ordinance that are ready to rise up and condemn me?

Where may I, who have lived in a time of great gospel light, hide my ignorance? O I would give all that I have for some where to hide these things so as they may never come to light. But all this will be in vain, there will be no place to hide either yourselves or sin in.

(6.) That you must come to an account and reckoning for all. As all must out, so all must be accounted for, to the very last and least idle word, Mat. xii. 36. You must be accountable for all the evil you have committed, of all the good you have omitted, of all the talents you have been intrusted with, as time, health, wealth, gospel, sabbaths, sermons, and ordinances; all must be accounted for.

(7.) That as you must come to account, so you can in no wise answer for what you have done. Alas, sirs, your doings, your lies, your oaths, your drunkenness, will be unanswerable matters; all your witty distinctions, shifts and excuses will be of no use when God shall say, why have you done so and so? why were you drunk at such a time, in such a place? why did you defraud one another? why did you profane my day? I say, you will then be silent. The man who "had not on the wedding garment, was speechless," Mat. xxii. 12. This shows how little you can answer for sin, how shiftless and speechless guilt will make you. O think on this and let the consideration of the unanswerableness of your doings put you to

break from your sinful ways! and that the rather, because as you cannot answer for them yourselves, so,

(8.) There will be none to answer for you; Job v. 1. "To which of the saints wilt thou turn?" Alas, it will be in vain to turn to any of them. None of them will answer in thy behalf, nor can they if they would. Only Christ Jesus can answer for souls in this case; but if thou come to this opening in thy sins, he will not then answer for thee: Acts v. 31, "God hath now indeed exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins." But when this opening day comes, it will be "the great day of his wrath; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 17. This will be a day wherein he will not come to plead for them that are found in their sins, but to render vengeance to them.

(9.) You are sure to be cast and fall in the judgment. This will be the issue; you will not be able to answer for yourselves. Christ will not answer for you; God will abate you nothing; therefore surely you cannot stand. Ps. i. 5. There are but two ways of standing in the judgment: either First, by Christ's righteousness apprehended by faith, and they who have this shall stand; for "he that believeth on him is not condemned," John iii. 18. "He," says Christ, "that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation."

John v. 24. Or, Secondly, by our own righteousness, or the works of the law, an absolute and every way perfect conformity to the law ; if a man had this he might stand thereby. But now, sirs, the ungodly can stand neither of these two ways. Not by Christ's righteousness, for they are Christless creatures. Not by their own righteousness, for they are transgressors of that law that curses for the least breach thereof. Gal. iii. 10. This way of standing is, and ever hath been impossible for all mankind since the fall. "Therefore," says the apostle, Rom. iii. 20. "by the deeds of the law there shall be no flesh justified in his sight." Therefore ; wherefore ? Why, ver. 19. "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." This way the most eminent of saints cannot stand ; Ps. cxxx. 3. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities ; O Lord, who shall stand ?" David himself says, Ps. cxliii. 2. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant : for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Thus sinners you are sure to fall in the judgment, you have not Christ's righteousness, and man is not "justified by the works of the law," Gal. ii. 16. And,

(10.) If once you fall in the judgment, you must fall into hell, where you must lie till you have paid the uttermost farthing. Mat. v. 26. And when will that be ? Why, never, the punishment there will be everlasting, chap. xxv. 46. Your damnation will be everlasting dam-

nation, because you can never make satisfaction. Well, sirs, these are the things I would entreat you to take into your thoughts, they are certain truths: and will you yet continue in your sinful states and ungodly ways? Will you, though you know the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men? Will you, though your ungodliness and unrighteousness be on record? Will you, though you be bound over to this opening day, and must unavoidably come to it? Though you must there meet all your actings fairly writ in the books? Though all your deeds of darkness and wicked works shall be fully displayed before God, angels, and men? Will you, though you must come to a reckoning for all; and though you will neither be able to answer for yourselves, nor will there be any to answer for you? Will you, though you are sure to fall in judgment, and to be cast into hell? Will you, I say, notwithstanding all this, persevere in sin? Truly if this be your resolution, it is a sad resolution. You are resolved to damn yourselves to all eternity. But, O! if you knew but what damnation is, if you had but once seen what is doing in another world, or but felt that one hour which the damned are groaning under, and have to groan under to eternity, you would be of another mind.

Third Use is of Exhortation.**First, general to all.****Shall the books be opened? Then,**

1. *Remember this opening, and carry it in your thoughts every day.* This is the first word I would leave with you. Think, O think much of this day, that never had the like before, nor ever shall again have after it! You have probably heard of that saying, "whether I eat or drink, whether I wake or sleep, methinks I hear that voice sounding in mine ears, Arise ye dead; and come to judgment." Why so, sirs, wherever you are, whatever you do, let this opening be in your eye, and upon your thoughts. Think on this when you go to prayer; this prayer, my preparation for it, my frame, carriage, and ends in it, must all be opened another day. Think on this when you go to hear, this sermon, every truth and duty laid before me herein will meet me again at the opening of the books. Think on this when you have to do with others, to buy or sell, or transact any affairs about this life with them; these actions I now do, and all the circumstances thereof will be found in the books at the last day. Think on this when temptations come on you, and you are in their power, if now I yield, I give place to the devil, and lay sin at my door, and it will abide in the books till they open, and all come out. And so in all other cases carry this along, with you in your thoughts. Pray, read, hear, buy, sell, eat and

drink, and do all that ever you do as remembering this. Remember this opening of the books, christians; and let the remembrance of it,

(1.) Be a remedy against sin, a preservative against iniquity in these sinful times wherein iniquity abounds. It is the remedy that *Solomon* prescribes to young men, Eccles. xi. 9. and there is much weight in it if persons would but lay it to heart. Remember, sirs, when you are ready to turn into any act or way of sin, and let no secrecy, no hope of hiding it from neighbours, friends, nor the whole world encourage you to venture on it; for choose how you may now to cover it; the books will open it. Let no seeming littleness of any sin draw you to make light of it; for there is none so little but there will be room enough found for it in the booke. The tradesman hath not only room in his books for pounds, shillings, and pence, but also for half-pence and farthings, and will not leave out one, but put it in its place. So be sure God hath room in his books for your least sins, which will cost, says one, either the blood of Christ, or your own ruine ere they be wiped out. O remember that sin goes out of your thoughts, out of your words, out of your works and ways into these books that are ready to be opeped before all the world. Watch therefore temptations, watch carefully against sin, against the occasions of sin, and appearance of evil.

(2.) Let the remembrance of this day in-

vite you to repentance. *Paul* urges this as a forcible and pressing motive to this duty, and tells us, that upon this account God "commands all men every where to repent." *Acts xvii. 30, 31.* Art thou an impenitent sinner, one who hast been and art backwards to the thoughts of repentance? Be forward in the thoughts of this. O think what thou hast in the books already, how many things, and foul things are on record against thee, how many oaths that thou hast sworn, how many lies that thou hast told, how many vain and idle words that thou hast spoken, and how many sinful and unlawful deeds that thou hast done. Take but up these thoughts, and they will convince thee of the need of repentance, they will induce thee to the practice of it. The books must be opened, how sad will it be if they open on thee in an impenitent state! Art thou one who hast laid the foundation of repentance from dead works? May not this be a mighty motive to thee to keep on building every day upon that foundation? Thou renewest thy sins every day, is there not then cause every day to renew thy repentance? Surely, sirs, if you think of this opening, and how you are sinning, it may be enough to make you say as *Tertullian* said of himself, that he was born for nothing but to repent. Saints should not put more sins in God's book, than they put tears in his bottle.

(3.) Let it put you upon the mortification of your corruptions, and striving after de-

liverance from this body of sin. If your sins be found alive at the opening of the books, you must die. If they be not then dead, then your life goes for them ; for "if you live after the flesh, ye shall die." Rom. viii. 13. And may not this put you on this study ? We find that when Nebuchadnezzar had erected a golden image with this commination, that whosoever would not fall down and worship it, should be cast alive into a fiery furnace, Dan. iii. that this took such impression on all that heard it, that there were none except three or four which did not presently fall down unto it : the thoughts of a fiery furnace made them do any thing. God hath kindled a fire that shall never be quenched ; and when the books open, all that have not thrown down their corruptions, their pride, passions and worldliness, shall be thrown into it without exception. And may not the thoughts of this be enough to set us upon throwing our lusts down before us ? It is said of the Roman, *Cato*, that for a long time he never declared his opinion about any matter in the senate, but he would still close with this expression, methinks *Carthage* should be destroyed ; this sat much on his spirits : so truly if we look at this opening, methinks this should be on our hearts, whatsoever else we think or do, that our corruptions should be destroyed, the flesh with the affections and lusts mortified.

(4.) Let it quicken and engage you to sincerity, in your professions, actions, ends,

aims, and in all that you do or say. The *Welch* have a proverb, that it is hard to know three things, an oak, a day, and a man. An oak; for the privy wind and shakes that may be within when it seems fair without. A day for the variableness of weather and accidents. A man, for his hollow hypocrisy. Why, truly now it is hardly known who is a hypocrite; and who sincere; who is really for God and godliness, and who in show and pretence only. "One that is a sheep without may be a sow within." But, sirs, make sure to be what you seem to be, to do what you seem to do, to do that with your heart that you do with your hand. Let this opening be an antidote against hypocrisy, carnal and corrupt ends in religion and profession. Harbour not an unsound heart under fair pretences; corrupt ends under specious performances, or a made religion in the life without truth in the inward parts. For the very hearts must be ripped up and laid open at this day, which will unmash and make naked all the *Jehu's* and *Judasess* in the world; the most close and wily hypocrites that ever were under heaven. In our life-time we have been judged by ourselves and others with our clothes on, then we shall all be judged naked; all wizards shall be laid aside. O remember this opening, and let it quicken you to sincerity. *Luther* tells us of one *Arsentius*, who made a great profession, was a man of eminent parts, praying and discoursing to admiration; when he came to his sick

bed, his friends that visited him expected to hear some great matters from him, and told him, that sure he could not but enjoy much comfort who had been so eminent for the profession and practice of godliness. But he answered, that he had not that comfort they thought he had, for he found it now with his soul not according to what man judgeth, but according to the judgment God passed upon him, and God, said he, judgeth righteous judgment. Thus at this great opening day it will be with us, not according to what we have only seemed to be, or what others have conceived of us, but according to what the great God really finds; and all will signify nothing if he find not truth within.

(5.) Let it put you upon serious endeavour to be entire and perfect in all points and parts of religion, to fill up your christian profession in every part. O sirs, be not partial in your obedience, in with one, out with another duty; careful in some things, careless in others; but make conscience of every known duty, indulge not any one known sin; though you fail in every part of your work, yet neglect not any part of it. Say not of any one duty, as Nauman; "In this, Lord, pardon thy servant." 2 Kings v. 18. Excuse me, Lord, in this neglect, in this omission, in this dispensing with my duty, in this indulging of my sin. I say, omit not any part of duty; for the books must be opened; and when these are opened, what hath been wanting will appear;

where our profession hath not been filled up; the gaps and chasms will be found; such an one was forward to public duties,, but was a prayerless person, and had a prayerless family; such an one was much for duties of the first table, but little for duties of the second. The books will open omissions as well as commissions, and God, as one says, will judge you, and may condemn you for what you have not done. Not doing is damning as well as sinful doing. You find in that solemn process, Mat. xxv. 42, 43. that the mention there made is of omissions,—for not doing. He does not say you robbed me, you persecuted me, you put me in prison; but ye gave me not meat when I was hungry, ye did not take me in when I was a stranger, nor visit me when in prison. And this their not doing what they should have done, was their undoing, and brought damnation on them. *Lavater* in his book of walking spirits relates a story concerning *Severinus*, a renowned and famous man in the times he lived in, who appeared when he was dead, and confessed that he was grievously punished because he had not said over his canonical hours in due time and distinctly, but had huddled them up in haste. This is but a fiction, yet certainly, sirs, there are many now in hell for omissions.

(6.) Let it induce you to exactness in all your works, and ways, not only to make conscience of every duty, but to study to be exact therein. This opening may excite us to pursue

Solomon's counsel; "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," i. e. to bring all thy skill, and lay out all thy strength in the doing of it. One drawing the picture of *Alexander* while there was a scar on his face, drew it with his finger upon the scar to cover it. And *Apelles* painted another half-faced, to cover the want of an eye. But, sirs, there are no such draughts of persons or actions in these books; there is no drawing of persons with fingers upon scars, to cover them, no drawing of actions half-faced to conceal defects and obliquities in them. They are drawn fully as they are in themselves: thy formal duties will not be found half-faced to conceal the formation of them; thy cold performances will not be found half-faced, to cover their coldness; nor thy uneven walking with fingers upon the uncouth haltings therein, to hide them. O methinks the thoughts of this should be a mighty help against the too common looseness of christians in their spirits and conversations, against the careless, cold, remiss and heartless performance of holy duties!

(7.) Let it be a spur to diligence, to unweariedness in the way, and abounding in the work of the Lord. When *Cornelius* was praying, an angel was sent from heaven to him with this message, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Acts x. 4. So christians, I am sent with this message to you, to tell you that your prayers

and alms, all your works of piety and charity go up to heaven, and are put on record in the books that shall be opened at the great day; and may not this be a great motive to present diligence and fruitfulness? Consider, you shall meet all your layings out for God in the books; your tears, prayers, doings, sufferings and reproaches for Christ, shall be found when these open. There is a "book of remembrance." Mal. iii. 16. Christ will remember the feeding of him in his famishing; the clothing of him in his naked; the harbouring of him in his outcast members. Mat. xxv. 34, &c. A cup of cold water shall not be forgotten. Mat. x. 42. You shall at this opening meet all your layings out for Christ; and you shall also then meet the reward of them all. It will be an opening wherein the judge will give "reward unto his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear his name, small and great." Rev. xi. 18. God will "render to every one according to their deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life," Rom. ii. 6, 7: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

(8.) Above all, let it put you to clear and evidence your title to, and interest in Christ. This was *Paul's* great ambition, to win Christ;

and to be found in him, Phil. iii. 8, 9. O let it be your endeavour. *Bellarmino* tells us of a University where those who were to proceed doctor had certain hard questions given them to resolve, and four and twenty hours allowed them to study for their answer ; and according to the resolution they gave, they were either to receive their degree with honour, or to be sent away with shame. Sirs, when the books are opened, this will be the great question to be resolved, Whose are you ? To whom do you belong ? What evidences can you show ? What proofs can you bring of your title to Christ ? And according to the resolution you give of this, you must stand or fall for ever. O therefore study this question now, and see whether those things you now bring as demonstrations of your acquaintance with Christ, and evidences of your interest in him, be such as will serve you to plead at this opening day ! Do you think that the bearing the name of christians, the bare profession of Christ, your coming to, and sitting under ordinances, or your layings out in the performance of external duties, are evidences sufficient of your interest in Christ ? If so you are mistaken ; for Christ tells you, Mat. vii. 22, 23. That "in that day many will say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works ? to whom he will profess, I never knew you." Nothing short of spiritual incomes of grace from him, and conformity

to him, will be enough to evidence an interest in him.

2. *Must the books be opened?* Then live for an opening day, as those that look for, and account that they must come to, this opening. It was the orator's advice to his hearers. "Let us so live as those that must give account of all." It is the apostle's exhortation, James ii. 12. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty," i. e. the law that spareth none, but dealeth with all freely without respect of persons, though higher or richer than others. So speak ye, and so do ye as those that must come to the opening of the books. Live now each day as those that are living for an opening day; live as ye would be found to have lived when this day comes.

(1.) In passing your precious time that God puts into your hands. Sirs, God takes notice what time he gives every one of us, what we do with every hour thereof, and will require it again at our hands. O spend your time as you would meet it at the last in the books! Would you meet with empty time, large shreds of time that nothing has been done in? Would you meet with time that hath been spent in vain thoughts, wasted with idle words, consumed about trifles and impertinencies? Would you meet with days and hours that have been spent in sinful hours and recreations, as carding, dicing, revelling, hunting, and the like practices? Days and nights that

have been passed in taverns, ale-houses, and whore-houses, in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness? Would you then meet with weeks and years that have been lost on your lusts, one while on this lust, another while on that? Consider this, would you meet time thus spent, wasted, lost, consumed, at the opening of the books? Surely you would not; but if you do, know of a certain that it will be a very sad meeting. As you, would not thus meet it, take heed how you now spend it; for if you spend it after this manner, you must meet it so. But O carry as those who are going to an opening day, in placing and bestowing your time! So pass your time that you may be found to have lived long in a short space. It was the saying of *Erasmus*, that nothing is more amiable than well to place our hours. This will certainly prove so, when the books begin to open, and time begins to come out, as it hath been past in secret, before all the world.

(2.) Live for this opening in improving your opportunities, your days, and means of grace; improve these as you would meet them in the books. Will the books bring any good news to you at their opening, if then you be found to have wasted your means and helps that God gave you in order to salvation; if opportunities stand on record, that you have neglected though laziness; that you missed to gratify your lusts; and that passed while you were spending your time at drinking matches?

Would you meet sabbaths that have been spent in recreations ; sermons that you have slept away ; ordinances that you have been under, but made no use of ? O, no, ! Therefore, when opportunities and advantages are offered unto you, that you have liberty to close with, think thus in yourselves ; would I have it recorded in the books that I missed this opportunity, or that I made it not my business to profit by it ? See that you be ready to close with, and diligent to improve days and means of grace. Our Saviour came from Nazareth to Bethabara to be baptized of John. Mat. iii. 18. John i. 28. which some compute to be about fifty-six of our English miles. But O, our laziness will not now go a fourth part of that way to partake of ordinances ? I have read of a good man, who when his time for devotion came, what company soever was with him, would take his leave of them, with this fair excuse, he had a friend that staid to speak with him, he meant his God. But, alas, how little matters do we suffer to be avocations and interruptions ! Any thing will serve many for an excuse to shift off an ordinance.

(3.) Live for this day in performing duties, as prayer, reading, and hearing the word ; perform these as you would meet them again. Would you meet cold, heartless, customary duties, that your hearts have not been in, duties that you have run over without affection or intention ? It will

be but a poor comfort to meet a company of these; and yet what bad work do many make this way! There are many (says Dr. Preston) that will not omit prayer; they pray from day to day, from time to time; and yet though they pray every day, they make not a prayer all their life, there being nothing of life or power in their performances, they only do them of course, or in a cursory way. O, christians, beware of this, beware of miscarriages in your duties; when formality, deadness, sleepiness, wanderings creep on you, think how you can meet, face, and own those duties, at the opening of the books; carry these thoughts with you as often as you go to any duty public or private.

(4.) Live for it in the affairs and business of your particular callings; learn to manage the business of your several callings, and go through all your worldly employments on such a manner as you would meet them again at this opening. Think how you would be found then to have gone through all your matters, with what integrity, plainness, simplicity, and faithfulness, and study now to go through them on such a manner. Keep your hands clean; keep your hearts above the world, when your hands are in it; buy not under-foot, sell not at over-rates; fetch not your gain out of other's certain and apparent loss; be not all for yourselves without respect to their indemnity with whom you have to do; use not false weights, or measures;

take not in any of those numberless tricks that all trades are full of ; resolye either to be rich with truth, or poor with content. That passage of king *Charles I.*, in a letter to the late king *Charles*, viz. "Do not think any thing worth obtaining by foul and unjust means," was of great weight with me when I first read it, and is worthy to be written in letters of gold. There is nothing under heaven worth obtaining by these means, or that being thus obtained, will bear its cost, or prove a saying bargain when the opening and accounting day comes. O do nothing in your callings and affairs in the world that you would not meet at last. You would not meet the tears and cries of those that you have wronged, the poor sunken families that you have oppressed, the widows, or fatherless, whose land-marks you have removed. O, do not such things as these now; or if any of you have done make restitution, otherwise you will, (as father *Latimer* in his last sermon before *Edward VI.* said to the king's officers) cough in hell, that all the devils there will laugh at your coughing.

(5.) Live for this great day, in ordering the whole of your conversation in the world ; walk so as you would meet your ways again ; let your lives be uniform and all of one piece. It is *Solomon's* advice, Prov. xxiii. 17. "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." If you would live for an opening day practise this, "be in the fear of the Lord all the day,"

and every day ; let to-morrow be as this day, and the next day as to-morrow. There are some if you would see their goodness, and be acquainted with their godliness, you must hit the right time, or else you will find none ; like some flowers that are seen but some months in the year, or like some physicians that they call forenoon men, they that would speak with them to any purpose must come in the morning, because commonly they are drunk in the afternoon. Thus may be in the morning you may take the hypocrite upon his knees in the saint's posture ; but when that fit is over, you shall see little of God in all his ways, till night brings him again of course to the like duty. Thus, sirs, too many are of different and contrary tempers ; changes of time, of place and company, make strange alterations in their frames and carriages. As it is said of the women in *Italy*, that they are saints in the church, goats in the garden, devils in the house, angels in the streets ; so it is with many, you may see them praying at one time, cursing, or swearing, or lying at another time ; serious in one place, light and vain in another ; religious and for religious exercises in one company, but ranting, and drinking, and healthing in another ; carrying as christians in some things, as infidels or atheists in other things. But such carriages as these will not serve for an opening day ; they are sad now, and a great reproach to religion ; but However any of you make them serve now, they will

never serve the turn when the books are opened. For our actions and carriages of all times, places, and companies must be put in the books, one as well as another; not only what we have done at such a time, in such a place, among such company when in our better moods, but also what we have done at another time, place, and company, when we were in a worse frame. If thou pray in the morning, and drink and live loosely all the day, and yet come to thy knees again at night, these things shall be pieced and put together just as thou hast acted them; but such mixtures will make bad work for an opening day, it will be dismal to find the books thus written over. Here a bible in the hand, and next a pair of cards or dice; here on thy knees in thy family, next drunk in the street or tavern; here taking a turn in God's way, next walking in sin's way. Books thus written will open terribly. If you would live for this opening, you must study an oneness and equality of carriage, and be "holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Pet i. 15. Not in some turnings of your life, but in your whole course; you must "do righteousness at all times." Ps. cxi. 3. One and another without exception. If we ride, "holiness unto the Lord" should be writ on our bridles; if we drink, "holiness unto the Lord of hosts" should be upon our pots. Zech. xiv. 20, 21.

(6.) Live for this opening, in laying out your receivings, and employing all your talents

the right way, whether spiritual graces; or temporal blessings. We find in the parable, Mat: xxv: 14,—30; that the servants who were intrusted with talents were called to a reckoning at last. This is that you must come to, the Lord will require from you an account of your stewardship. Would you live for an opening and accounting day? Lay out your talents in a right manner. Hath God intrusted you with a talent of grace, or gifts, or wealth, or authority? Take heed what use you put them to, endeavour in your place, and to your power, to profit others by them; use your gifts and graces in comforting, exhorting and counselling others. Have you wealth and estates? Think what good you may do with it. It is lamentable to see what use many that have useful estates are making of them! One hath a fair talent, in this respect, but he wraps it up in a napkin; the church hath no help; the poor fare no better, no good work goes off faster for him. Another hath the like talent, and he uses it; but how? Why, as beasts do their horns, in acts of violence and oppression: Through usury and pinching bargains he sucks the blood, and eats the flesh of many poor neighbours about him, thriving as people on the sea coasts by the wrecks of ships. Another sort waste their estates in riot and excess, in surfeiting and drunkenness; in pleasures and pastimes. "Were these to be painted," says *Baines* on the Ephesians, "they must be

brought in with dogs, hawks, dice, cards, courtesans; not clothing the naked, nor feeding the hungry, nor converting any of their estate to any good use.' But what will these do when the opening and reckoning day comes? O beware of such practices! And whatever God intrusts you with, be it more or less, make now the use of it that you would be found to have made when the books are opened. This is the second word, remember it, and remember to practise it: O, look on your actions every day, and think with yourselves, will this and this serve for an opening day, will this do at the great assizes? Would I meet my time thus spent, my opportunities thus neglected, duties thus performed, business thus transacted, conversations thus ordered, talents thus employed at the opening day? Will these prayers, these performances, these bargains, these ways do in that day? Thus commune with yourselves, and live as those that must come to the opening of the books.

3. Shall there be an opening of the books? *Then prepare and get ready for it.* Make it your work night and day to get into a readiness for a comfortable meeting of this great opening day, be persuaded to this whatever you leave undone. For consider,

(1.) That this opening will come; you do but hear of it now, but you shall see it hereafter. As our Saviour speaks, Mat. xxvi. 64. "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man

sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." So may I say, now you see but his poor ambassadors that preach his coming, but you shall hereafter see him come in a state of glory to open the books, to judge the quick and dead in one day. Sirs it is not a doubtful, a disputable point, not a matter in controversy among christians, but a principle owned and acknowledged by all sides and persuasions, being as fully and clearly revealed as any thing in the scriptures. The apostle in that one place, Acts xvii. 31. doth sufficiently and notably set forth this grand fundamental, giving us account, 1st. That a day is set. "He hath appointed a day: and the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, Ps. xxxiii. 11. The decree is gone, the day is proclaimed, it cannot be reversed, but must and will most certainly hold. 2dly. Of the end of this day appointed, viz, "to judge." 3dly. The object of this judgment, "the world." 4thly. The manner how this judgment shall be managed, "in righteousness;" there shall be no corruption in this administration. 5thly. The judge, "the man whom he hath ordained," i. e. the Lord Jesus Christ, God-man. 6thly. The assurance hereof given unto all men, in that he hath "raised him from the dead." This is sufficient testimony to convince all men. This may be inducement to the proposed duty of preparation, there will be an opening day. If it were a matter only probable, if as much

might be said against it as for it; then carelessness in preparing for it might be somewhat excusable. Seeing then this is out of question, and beyond all dispute shall we not make it our work to prepare? Consider it, sirs, God hath issued out a proclamation, and it hath been published again and again in your hearing, wherein he gives you notice of a day appointed for this end, of the persons that must come to it, and that yourselves are of this number; shall you not then be most inexcusable if you come to it unready? What will you say? Will you plead, Lord, had I ever thought of such a day as this, I would not have done as I have, I would have watched and prayed, and lived for it all my days? Why, alas, thy mouth will be stopped; Christ will tell you his writ was out; and his grand assizes was many a time proclaimed in thy presence; yea the books shall openly show the times, the places and circumstances of its manifestation to thee. O sirs, the end is declared from the beginning, "and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, Isa. xlvi. 10. All generations have had fair warning of it, and we upon whom the ends of the world are come want none."

(2.) That the time of this great opening is uncertain. The opening is certain, but the time when is unseen. There have some indeed undertaken to foretel the time. In the primitive days, and while the apostles were yet alive; there were some that pretended reve-

lations or visions from the Spirit, declaring this day to be then near, 2 Thes. ii. 2. And since many have presumed to foretel the year, whose predictions time hath already confuted. *Aventinus* shews, that about the year 1062, the credulous people were so deluded by such ridiculous predictions, that there was a general expectation of the great day of judgment as then just upon them. The furious Anabaptists in *Germany*, in the year 1530, were so confident that the last day should be within that year, that some of them gave their estates about them to those who would have part, reckoning that a little would serve them for so short a time; and some of them ran up and down, crying to the people with a doleful noise, repent, repent, the day of the Lord is come. There are some who told us, that the year 1675, others that the year 1680, others that 1688, others that 1695, and some tell us that 1700 will put an end to the world, and open the great opening day. But our Saviour, Mat. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. asserts, that it is an unknown day. 1st. To all men, to the greatest, the wisest, the best of men. No man can tell when this shall be. 2ndly. To all angels; not only to us poor men on earth, but also to the glorious angels in heaven, who see the face of God continually. These, though they must accompany Christ, though they must minister to him in that day, gathering all nations before him, yet of this day they know not. 3dly. To the Son

of Man himself, as man, or according to his human nature; for here he opposes himself as man, to his Father as God. Or, the Son of Man knows it not with respect of his office, though he knew it with respect of his nature, i. e. he was not sent to reveal and make this known to man in his ministry. Thus you see this great day is an unknown day, a day that shall come upon men when they think not of it. Therefore, he illustrates it by the coming of a "thief in the night." Mat. xxiv. 43. Of a "bridegroom coming at midnight," chap. xxv. 6. Of a "master returning." Luke xii. 36, 37. O this day will come unawares upon the world: and doth not this call upon you to be serious in your preparation for it! May it come this night, the next morning, when we are taking our rest? May we be awaked with this dreadful sound, arise and come to judgment? Or when we rise and are abroad about our affairs, may we see Christ breaking out of heaven, and coming in the clouds with power and great glory? Why then we have need to make it our work to prepare. Our Saviour uses this very motive to persuade to this duty. Mat xxiv. 44. Luke xii. 40. In both these places you have the duty I am prescribing prescribed. "Therefore be ye also ready," ready to meet the Son of Man, ready to come to this opening day. Also the motive inducing thereto annexed, drawn from the secrecy and uncertainty of the time; for in "such an hour as ye think not, the Son of

Man cometh." They might say, Lord, but what need is there of all this, of getting into and keeping in readiness? Will it not be time enough to do this when we see the day approaching? What must we needs do it now? Yes, now be ready.

(3.) That this opening-day will be a great day. As it will come, and its coming is certain, so it will be a very great day when it comes. The apostle styles it "the great and notable day of the Lord." Acts. ii. 20. Observe it is the day of the Lord: these are our days in which we eat and drink, marry and give in marriage, and go over great numbers and varieties of actions; but this day will be the Lord's day, the day that hath his mark on it, as a day whereon he will do his great works. And it is the great and notable day of the Lord. He hath had many days of particular rewards and punishments, but no day like this, therefore it is frequently in the scripture called; "that day," by way of excellency. Mat. vii. 22. 2 Thes. i. 10. 2 Tim. i. 18. & iv. 8. That singular day that never had any like before, nor shall have after it; that wonderful day; that last day; that day that ends all days; that that all must come to; that day that all should prepare for; that day that will be glorious to Christ; that day that will be joyful to saints; that day that will be shameful to sinners. Sirs, this day, this day of days, will be a great and notable day, if we consider,

1stly. The person that shall then appear, viz. the Lord Jesus Christ. It is called "the coming of our Lord." 1 Cor. i. 7. "The revelation of Jesus Christ." 2 Thes. i. 7. "The appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. i. 7. He came once humbled in the form of a servant, but he shall then appear and be revealed in glory, this will be "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Tit. ii. 13. who shall come in a bright cloud, "in a glorious body," Phil. iii. 21. in "his own glory," Mat. xxv. 31. in "his father's glory," ch. xvi. 27. in the "glory of his angels." Luke ix. 26. "Thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him," Dan. vii. 10. O sirs, the coming of Christ at this day will be a glorious coming, he will come in glory and power beyond all that ever was seen to this day, and past all that ever shall be seen before that day.

2dly. The persons that must come to this opening. Many thousands, many millions, infinite millions of persons, of all ranks and conditions. All men, all nations, all the world must be convened before him at that day. Rom. xiv. 10. Mat. xxv. 31, 32. Acts xvii. 31. Not only men, but nations of men; not only nations, but all nations, all the world. O what a wonder will it be to see all persons that ever lived in all ages of the world, gathered into one company and place.

3dly. The things that must then be opened.
No. 5. 8

All things of all men, things that have been hid from ages and generations, things that were never opened before to any, shall come out then before all men. There is nothing so small or inconsiderable but will be revealed, nothing so secret or hidden but it shall come abroad when the Lord comes, "who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." 1 Cor. iv. 5. And what a great opening will this be? It will be such a sight as never was seen, to see all mankind meeting; O but it will be more to see all things that have been done under the sun, by so many millions of men and women brought and laid open as they are in themselves, and their several circumstances!

4thly. The greatness of the assembly before whom the books shall be opened. This opening shall not be in the presence of some few, as of a family, a congregation or parish, but in the presence of angels and men, before a world. Alas, many, many would be ashamed to be laid open before a few of their neighbours, and to have their secret things of darkness brought out into light among their nearest friends. O but sinner, those things at this opening shall be opened before the world, that now thou wouldest not have thy own father to know, thy mother that bare thee to see, thy husband or wife that lies in thy bosom privy to, that child that came out of thy loins acquainted with, nor thy bosom friend a witness of.

Sthly. The things done at this opening. Now at this opening of this grand assize there will be a final determination of all men's states thenceforward to all eternity. You have, Mat. xxv. 31, 32. described the preparatives to this opening, viz. the coming of the judge, his sitting on the throne of his glory, the congregating of all nations, their separation one from another, the collocation of the sheep on his right, and the goats on his left hand ; and then you have the great work of this day, which lies chiefly in passing a definitive sentence upon persons. There have been many great trials here among men, some have had trials about estates and titles to inheritances, some have got and some have lost estates of hundreds and thousands in the year. Many have been upon trial for their lives, some stood, others fallen. But all these, even those of them that gave occasion to the greatest noise in the world, are inconsiderable, and nothing to the causes to be determined at that day. Then the trial will be what title men have, not to such and such houses and estates, but to the kingdom of heaven ; what they can say, not to preserve a temporal, but what they can show for eternal life ; and the determination thereof will not settle them in, or throw them out of temporal possessions, but either settle a kingdom on them to eternity, or sink them into a prison for evermore. Then one moment will assign an eternal mansion to every person. Thus you see this opening will

be a great and notable day, and may not this put you upon preparing for it? Suppose thou wert to have a trial about thy estate in the world, or wert to be tried for thy life the next term or assizes, and the cause were then to be determined with or against thee, wouldest thou make no provision for it, take no care about it? Surely thou wouldest! We see lawyers are thronged to in such cases, friends improved to the utmost, all circumstances weighed, and nothing neglected that may help. Why, thou art sure at this opening either to get or loose a kingdom, either to be made or undone, and that for evermore. O then fall upon this work, and that the rather, because,

(4.) This opening day, (wherein such great things are to be done) will find many unready, and take many unprepared for it. This great day will meet many without anything to meet it with. The apostle, 1 Thes. v. 3, 3. shows, 1st. How this day will come upon the world, "as a thief," i. e. suddenly and unexpectedly; a thief gives no warning. 2dly. How it would find the world, viz. secure, fearless, careless, unready, so unready that destruction shall come upon them, and they shall not escape. Our Saviour himself, Luke xvii. 26—31, sets out this day by comparing it with the days of *Noah's* flood. There shall be a great conformity between those days and these, between the men of those times and these. How was it in the days of *Noah*? They had heard of a flood, as we do of this

opening day, but they eat and drank; as we do, and never minded it, till it came upon their heads, and swept them all away. Why, even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Many had heard of the flood, but when it came few were in any readiness for it, or found any way of escape from it. So, many hear of this day, few will be found in readiness for it, and none shall escape it; and may not this awaken you to care in this behalf! O many, very many will be then unready! Look to it that you be not of their number, and that the rather, because,

(5.) As you are then found, so you are sure to fare for ever. Christ will take you just as he finds you at that day. The old world was taken unready, and there was no remedy, it was too late to think of preparing arks. The foolish virgins were found unready, and the door was shut against them. So when Christ comes, poor sinners that are found unready shall have no time to provide in, he will take them as he finds them, without any delay. Some shall be found in the bed, others in the mill, others in the field, Luke xvii. 34, 35, 36. and as they are found so they shall be taken. If two be in one bed, one a gracious, the other a graceless person, they must immediately be separated, the one shall be taken to receive a sentence of absolution, the other left to lie and sink under a sentence of damnation. The main scope of this discourse is to show that there will be no coming off, no mending of matters, no making

of things either better or worse than they are found at that day, but all men shall be dealt with as they are found, and differently, according to their different states. O sirs, when it is come to this, that the books are opened, there will then be no further transaction about matters of salvation or damnation, but the cause will be presently and clearly determined either with or against you. Doth it not then concern every one to labour to get into a readiness for this day.

(6.) That this opening will be very dreadful to them that are unready. Many will be found unready, every one must stand as he is then found, and this day will be terrible to those on whom it comes in this case. We read of three terrible openings : one when the "fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." Gen. vii. 11, 21, 22, 23. These were opened and never shut till the world was drowned. Another is the opening of the earth which closed not again till it had inclosed *Korah* and those that appertained to him, with their houses and goods in its womb. The third is the opening of the cave at *Makkedah*, which ushered in a speedy destruction to those kings that were a little before in great pomp and state, Josh. x. 22, 23. Ay, but sirs, this is a more dreadful opening than any of these, and will be more terrible in itself, and to them that come to it unprepared, than those were. When the windows of heaven were opened, the world

was drowned ere they shut again ; but when the books are opened, the world of ungodly men shall be damned ere they shut : when the earth opened, it shut not again till it had swallowed up *Korah* and his wicked accomplices : when the books are opened, the wicked shall sink into hell before they be closed again. When the cave was opened, *Joshua* took thence the five kings, and caused the captains of his men of war to tread on their necks, and afterwards smote them ; but when the books shall be opened, the saints shall tread down the wicked, and they shall be as ashes under their feet. Heb. x. 31. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," so as the wicked shall fall. Pray think of it, it will be more terrible than can now be expressed or imagined, all the descriptions and circumstances of it, with reference to men in their sins, are very dreadful. As in a word or two to instance, this day will be dreadful unto sinners if we look,

1. *At the Judge*, who is described "descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God, 1 Thes. iv. 16. descending "with his mighty angels, accompanied with flaming fire, to take vengeance," 2 Thes. i. 7. 8. Ps. l. 3. Mal. iv. 1. to "tear," Ps. l. 22. to "punish," 2 Thes. i. 9. These are tremendous expressions, and if it be nothing to hear them, it will be something to see them receiving their accomplishment, to see Christ descending with a

shout, attended with his mighty angels, clothed in flames of fire, to tear, take vengeance, and punish.

2. *At the day*, which is set out on the like terrible manner, as "a great day," Jude 6. as "a great day of wrath," Rev. vi. 17. as "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5. as "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Pet. iii. 7. O what appalling expressions!

3. *It will be a terrible day*, if we look at the poor sinners who are brought in weeping and wailing at the first opening of this day, Mat. xxiv. 30. Rev. i. 7. O then poor scoffers "who walking after their own lusts," 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. "say, where is the promise of his coming?" shall have their tune turned. They will then turn to their desperate but useless shifts. When they see him on the throne, they shall cry to the rocks and mountains, "fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Rev. vi. 16. But this will be a vain cry; vain, I say, for the creature cannot hide when the Creator is in pursuit. But though this be in vain, they will thus cry, which shows the terror that shall then come upon them. And if the seeing of the Judge make them thus a *Magormissabib*, what a taking will they be in when the books are opening, to open all their doings before the whole world! What a taking will they be in when the condemning sentence is ringing

in their ears! When they are sinking together into the lake of fire and brimstone!

4. *At the sentence to be passed on them,* which is most sad and horrible; "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Mat. xxv. 41. Every word carries a woe, a thousand woes; a world of woes in it. O sirs, to depart, to be sent away, to depart cursed, under the load of heaven's curse; to depart cursed from Christ: the Fountain of Light, the Lord of Glory, and the River of pleasures; to depart thence into fire, into everlasting fire, fire prepared for the devil and his angels; this will be a fearful thing! O when poor creatures see that there is no escaping, but now they must go, and go with a curse for their portion; and go from Christ, angels, saints, and heaven; and go to dwell in everlasting fire, and have the devil and his angels for their companions; what weeping and wailing will there be among them!

5. *If we look at the consequents of this opening, these are very dreadful to sinners.* For this opening will be immediately followed,

1st. With an eternal opening of conscience; which will cause restless and endless terror, horror, and torment; and of the bottomless pit, and lake of fire, where they shall be for ever tormented with "everlasting punishment." Mat. xxv. 46.

2dly. An everlasting shutting out of the presence of God, and kingdom of heaven, in

darkness, and under damnation.

Now if any say, how may we get into such a readiness for this great opening of the books, as that they may not open to our shame, confusion, and condemnation? Why, if you would be ready so as that when the books open, heaven may not shut, and hell open on you to all eternity, then,

(1.) Be often thinking on this opening day; spend some time every day in serious thoughts of this great day. I have before pressed this as a duty incumbent upon all, and now urge it as a direction for those who would be ready at this day. Wouldest thou be prepared? then let this day be ever in thy eye by serious meditation: this will be a good help unto thee in several respects, as have been before shewn. Q therefore carry this opening ever in thine eye! When thou openest a book to read, or seest another open one, let it put thee in mind of this opening of the books: when thou seest the morning opening after a dark night, and bring many things to light that lay covered with darkness; let it put thee on thinking what an opening there will be in the morning of the resurrection and final judgment, how things will then come out. When thou seest the day shutting, think what a shutting this great day will have. When thou art undressing thyself, and putting off thy clothes, think what a day this will be when thou and all the sons of men must be stripped and laid open before the world of angels and men. When

thou hearest of strange discoveries of thefts, murders, and whoredoms, let it mind thee of this opening that will open all the hidden things of darkness, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof; let every thing be thus a remembrancer to thee of this, and set afoot in thee some thoughts about it. I have read of one of the ancients, noted for his singular piety, and eminent holiness, who being asked what books he made his companions, and used most, he answered, that it was his practice every day to read over a book that had three leaves, one red, a second black, a third white. In the red he used to read and meditate on the bloody passion of Christ; in the black, the darkness and damnation of hell; in the white, the light and glory of heaven, whereby he gained more in the way of practical godliness, than by any other study. I would here add a fourth leaf to this book, viz. This opening day, and commend the reading of it to every one that would be then ready.

(2.) Watch and pray. This is our Saviour's direction that he prescribes in this case, Luke xxi. 36. In the foregoing verses you have,—Our Saviour's description of this day.—His admonition to his disciples, not to be “taken unawares” and unready, ver. 34.—The reason of this admonition, “For as a snare shall it come on them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.” ver. 35. It shall come suddenly and take them unready, and then,—In

these words you have his means of prevention prescribed, and they are two, watch, and pray. Would you not be taken unready? Watch, exercise yourselves in a universal carefulness over your hearts and ways, over the wiles and ways of satan, over the stirrings and motions of corruptions in yourselves, the occasions and advantages of sin in the world, that you fall not into snares. And to watchfulness join prayer, that great safeguarding duty. Watch and pray, pray and watch, that ye may be accounted worthy; never think that you can be ready at this day, if now in your day you live at large, if you make no matter what company you walk with, what temptations you run into, what sins you lay at your door; if you will be false with God in your profession, unjust with men in your dealings; if you will drink and swear, and profane the Lord's day: no, no, this work will not do; I tell you, sirs, it will not do: Woe to you if any of you put it to this venture, and say, (as, alas, the practices of too many say aloud) either this shall do, or I will be undone, for then you are sure to be undone for ever. If you would have this day find you ready, let to-day and to-morrow, and the next day find you praying and watching, find you with your loins girt, and your lights burning; as servants that wait for their Lord. We read of four beasts, Rev. iv. 6, 8, that were full of eyes, both before, and behind, and within. Why thus, as these had not one eye, but many eyes, so you must be full of eyes; there must

be eyes looking forward, observing ever what we have before us, what we enter on, or put our hand to ; and there must be eyes looking backwards, ever reflecting on past actions, on what we have done, that we may spy and correct our errors ; and there must be eyes looking inward, watching over that cunning deceitful piece the heart, and the workings thereof. They that would be ready at this day, must watch and pray at their day.

(3.) Make the word of God the rule of your conversation in the world : this must be the rule of judgment then, let it be the rule of your life now ; you must be judged by this book at the great opening, if you would then stand, live by it now in your day. This is another thing I would leave with you by way of direction, O take it up ! You see there must be a great opening, men must be judged according to their works, and their works according to the word ; so that if you would be ready, live now according to this book, and learn to walk according to this rule, in all your ways and actions keep an eye on this. We find that the four beasts, Rev. iv. 8, had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within : wings are for motion, eyes for guidance and direction in that motion ; so that this phrase imports that their motion was not blind and lawless, but regular and orderly. Why thus we must have eyes under our wings, i. e. our actions and motions must be ordered, guided, and directed by the

light of the word : says David, Ps. cxix. 105. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path ;" q. d. I am as one in the dark who dare not walk, nor stir a step from his station without a light to direct him. I dare not walk without thy word, turn into any way and course but such as this guides me into, and shines on me in. So he shows that God's "testimonies were his counsellors," ver. 24. He alludes unto the customs of kings who have their counsellors ever ready to assist them in their great and arduous affairs, q. d. as kings have their counsellors, so have I too ; thy testimonies they are the men of my counsel, in all my matters I go to them, and consult with them, I hear what they say, and of them I take direction. Why thus, sirs, if you would be in readiness for an opening day, let the word of God be a lamp to your feet, and let his testimonies be the men of your counsel ; ere you entertain or take in thoughts, before you send out any words, or set upon any actions, go to this word with them, and hear what it hath to say of this thought, that word, of those works, and let it be your utmost endeavour as far as is possible, to put nothing into those books which shall be opened, but what this book now open warrants and allows. If such and such an action, way, or practice, will not stand before the word, let it not stand in your lives, this is the way to see a comfortable opening at last. "If you will write the book of conscience aright, write it

according to the book of life ; the book of life is Christ." Let the profession of your faith be conformable to the rule of his doctrine, and in your life imitate the life of Christ. "Every one that doeth evil hateth light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved," John iii. 20. They cannot abide to be tried by scripture-rules, they dare not put their doings to be tried by the book of God ; but this will make foul work for an opening day. If your ways cannot stand before the word now, never think that they shall stand before it another day : the word that now condemns drunkenness, will then condemn it ; the word that condemns oaths and lies now, will condemn them at that day. The sentence at this great opening shall not be another, or different sentence, but only a manifestation, confirmation of that which is now passed in the word upon men and their actions. O if we would but make it our care to follow this one direction, and write nothing in those books which are to be opened, but what we take out of the book which is now open and set before us as our exemplar and copy, putting nothing on record there but what we find allowed here ; then what manner of persons should we be, and how far otherwise would the books be found at this great opening, than most will find them !

(4.) Reckon often with yourselves, call yourselves frequently to account, be much in self-examining, self-judging exercises. I have read of one who would ask himself three ques-

tions every night ; What evil hast thou heale^d to day ? What corruption hast thou stood agaipst to day ? Wherein, or in what art thou bettered now this day is gone ? Why on this manner sirs be often dealing with yourselves, lay the word and your own hearts, the word and your own ways together at the end of every day. When you have gone over a day in the world, go over it again between the word and your own souls, and seriously renew your repentance and self-accusations. You say, often reckoning keeps long friends ; O reckon oft with God and your own souls ; "for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged," 1 Cor. xi. 31. Our self-accusations would prevent satan's accusations against us : he is the accuser of the brethren, and will have many things to charge us with ; but when a man accuses and humbles himself, satan is prevented ; though he come in with this and the other complaint, God will say, as it were, why satan, this man hath accused himself before thou camest ; thou art here with this now, but he was here with it and mourned over it as soon as it was done, the same day ; and he hath been oft at my feet about it with sorrow in his heart, and tears in his eyes ; yea this would not only prevent satan's accusations, but the judgment of God. "If we could judge ourselves with a penitential, the penal judgment would be prevented." Says David, Ps. xxxii. 5. "I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid ; I said, I will confess my trans-

gressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." The spouse, privy to her own infirmities, called herself black, Cant. i. 5. but Christ calls her fair. If we will condemn ourselves, God will justify us; if we put our tears, that come from a right spring, into his bottle, he will not seal up our iniquities in a bag, for which those tears were shed.

(5.) Make it your great study and care to have and keep conscience your friend; this is now your constant companion, and goes whither you go; this will be a thousand witnesses, yea, and a judge in your own bosom at that day. Exercise yourself as *Paul*, to "have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men," Acts. xxiv. 16. Labour to have such a conscience as may speak well of thee when thou comest to judgment. "In the day of judgment a good conscience will be better than a full purse;" for which many men wound and wrong, and sear their own consciences. This will in that day be no better than mire in the streets; but to have a good conscience to go with us to the bar, and witness for us there, will be something. As you would stand in the judgment, look to this in all your ways, and be often listening to hear what it says to you, and of you. It is said of *Apelles* the famous painter, that when he had finished a draught, he would usually expose it to view, and lie behind it, that he might hear what others said of it. Why, on this manner bring

all your actions to the view of conscience, and hear what this, going by a right rule, and rightly informed, says of them ; for "if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things," 1 John iii. 20. This is but the deputy judge, and if this condemn, the great and supreme judge will not absolve. Art thou forced now to neglect and disregard, to silence and slight ; nay, to wound and resist thy conscience ? would it stop thee, and thou wilt not be stopped ? Why, alas, the day is coming when this conscience will surely condemn thee, and God who is greater than conscience will condemn thee also. Sirs, if you would have conscience your friend at that day, give it content now ; if you would not have it full of complaints then, study to keep it void of offence now.

(6.) Lastly, above all, and without which all is nothing, labour to be found in Christ at this great opening day. This was *Paul's* great study to win Christ, and "to be found in him;" Phil. iii. 9. Let it be your great business to win Christ in this day, to be found in him at that day. I say, to be found in Christ, i. e. to be washed in his blood, clothed with his righteousness, all lies on this, nothing but this will serve at this opening. It is only the blood of Christ that blots, scores, and crosses out our sins ; it is only the merits of Christ that satisfies divine justice for our iniquities ; it is only the righteousness of Christ that covers all our unrighteousness, and is our

righteousness ; it is only the death of Christ that sets matters right between God and souls interested therein. Nothing but Christ's righteousness will serve for Christ's judgment. O when he comes with his garments white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool, Dan. vii. 9. and sits on a white throne, Rev. xx. 11. there will be no standing for any but such as are arrayed in the white robes of Christ's righteousness. Out of Christ then, and undone for ever ; but if then you have Christ, all shall be well. *Luther*, in his commentary on *Genesis*, prescribes unto tempted persons one compendious way, to withstand all temptations whatsoever : says he, let satan come any way, or the world come any way, or the flesh move any way, answer all with these two words, I may not, I must not, for I am a Christian. Why, as that is a compendious way of answering all temptations ; so this will be a compendious way of answering all accusers and accusations at the opening day ; and not only compendious, but the one and only way, viz. I have a Christ. As a believer may answer all present temptations, so may he with this, when all is open before the world, angels and men, answer all accusations of justice, law, sin, satan, and all accusers. It is called the answer of a good conscience. A good conscience is a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, and this conscience hath an answer to make for the soul. We read of the "answer of a good conscience to-

wards God," 1 Pet. iii. 21. Now an answer supposeth a question, all answer towards God supposeth a question from him to the creature. Now the question, says one, that God is supposed to propound to the poor creature, may be conceived to be this: What canst thou say, who art a sinner, and stands, by the curse of my righteous law, doomed to death and damnation, why thou shouldst not die the death pronounced against every sinner? This is the grand question. Now, saith he, the soul that hath heard of Christ, and hearing of him bath received him by faith into his heart, is the person, and the only person that can answer this question so as to satisfy God or himself. Take the answer as it is formed and fitted for, yea, put into the mouth of every believer by the apostle *Paul*, Rom. viii. 34. "Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Who condemneth? Here is the confident interrogatory of a good conscience. It is Christ that died, &c. Here is its comfortable answer, an answer that none can ever object against. Why, my beloved, as this is now an answer beyond exception, so it will be in that great day. If you have but then this answer of a good conscience, and can say, I have a Christ who died for me, you shall need to fear no accusers, no condemnation. Even then when the heavens and the earth are flying away from the face of him that sits on the

throne, and multitudes of all ranks are crying to the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from his face, this plea will abide the sight of God, and stand before his dreadful tribunal, at the great day of the revelation of his righteous judgment.

Secondly, particular Exhortation.

1. To sinners. 2. To saints.

1. *To sinners.* Shall the books be opened? Then this speaks to poor secure sinners who make nothing of this great opening, never mind it or once think how they shall speed at that day; but say in their hearts, if we may escape till then, let us then do as we can, we hope we shall shift as well as many more that will be in our own case. It is to be feared that in these profane times there are more than a few of these, who yet, led with custom, come too and set up their faces in our congregations. If any of you that are come hither this day be of this sort of persons, such as care not for this great opening, but keep on in your sins, filling up the books every day with new abominations; the Lord hath sent me hither this day to meet you with a word of exhortation; and knowing the terror of the Lord, what a terrible time it will be, I persuade, beseech, entreat you to entertain it. It is that of the apostle. Acts iii. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall

come from the presence of the Lord." This wrought with many at that time, chap. iv. 4. O do no more make light of this day and the things thereof, but repent now, and be converted, that your sins may be then blotted out. This is the word that I would leave with you ; and pray consider, that you may not make light of it,

(1.) That pagans and heathens have trembled at the hearing of this day, Acts. xxiv. 25. *Mark*, *Paul* was here preaching, and *Felix* was hearing, and as *Paul* reasoned he trembled, he was in a great consternation. When the judgment to come was laid before him, his conscience began to awake, and put him into a trembling posture. Now will you be worse than professed pagans; more stupid, senseless, and fearless than heathens? Shall a man who never heard of a day of judgment before, who never was under an ordinance before, as *Felix*, tremble at the preaching of this judgment, and you who have heard hundreds of sermons, make light of it ? O think of this, and what a dreadful thing it will be to have a *Felix* rise up in the judgment against you ; poor pagans to come in and cry, O if we had been forewarned of such a day as these have been, we would never have done as we did ! Sirs, you would take it ill now if one should rank you with pagans and heathens. O what will it be to be made speechless by them, to have them crying and coming in against you; yea, to see the Lord himself, bringing them

-against you, and saying, lo, here are poor creatures that would have repented in dust and ashes if this day might have been preached to them as it hath been many a time; and by meay of my ambassadors to you!

(2.) That the very devils themselves tremble at the thoughts of this great day. They are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, Jude 6. A metaphor taken from notorious malefactors who are kept in close prison till the assize where they are to be tried and have judgment. Thus the devils are reserved to this great day, and they tremble to think of it. They believe and tremble, i. e. are under a continual fear and dread of the great God who will come one day, as they know, to judgment against them. This they tremble at: the word signifies an extreme fear, shaking and tumult, as is in the sea when it works and is tempestuous. Thus the thoughts of the day of judgment make a hurry, a roaring even among the devils, they are under dreadful commotions at the reflection on this day, because then the fulness of their torments is to begin. Hence was that cry, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Mat. xiii. 29. Austin thinks that when the devils saw Christ thus come into the world, they thought the day of judgment, which they expected not so soon, was just upon them, and this apprehension put them into a mighty con-

sternation : "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" O they were in a fearful fit upon this. And sirs, will you be worse than them. Not only worse than pagans, but than devils also? Will not that which shakes hell itself, shake and awake your consciences? Shall devils tremble in hell at the thoughts of this day, and poor sinners on earth, that must be in that day sorted, and sink for ever with them, be secure and careless?

(3.) That this day will make you, that are most secure and confident, to tremble if it take you in your sins: pagans have trembled, devils do tremble, and you shall tremble. "The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath." Job xxi. 30. 2 Pet. ii. 9. And O when this day is come, and is upon you, there will be trembling and shaking amongst you. The great executions of wrath on wicked men are reserved to that day. There have been many terrible plagues upon the world, but sirs, the saddest, the strangest, the most affrighting, have been but as drops to the showers of this day; smokings of God's wrath, to the fire of this day. The old world was drowned with a very terrible inundation, but there is a more dreadful doom abiding for it. *Sodom* was destroyed with a sudden and strange destruction, but there is a more strange destruction to come on those, filthy sodomites. Some of the ancients have said, that there are three sorts of thunderbolts in heaven; the first

to warn, not to hurt ; the second to hurt, but not to destroy ; the third to ruin and lay all waste. The two first sorts, says one, God often in this life dischargeth upon wicked men, but the third and worst is reserved for this day, when all the artillery of heaven shall go off at once, when all the fountains of God's wrath shall be broken up, when the Lord "shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest" upon the wicked, Ps. xi. 6, O sirs, the cheer will be turned when you see signs in the sun, when you see the tribes of the earth mourn, the heavens passing away with a great noise, the elements melting with fervent heat and the earth with the works that are therein burnt up. I remember I have read of crook'd back Richard, that in that battle wherein he fell, when he saw himself in a helpless condition, he cried out vehemently, "A kingdom for a horse, a kingdom for a horse." Why so, soul, when thou art under these circumstances, thou wilt cry out, riches for a Christ, gold and silver for a Christ, houses and land for a Christ, a kingdom if I had it for a Christ, the world if it were mine for a Christ. Now give me Christ, and grace, and pardon, and take all my riches, treasures and pleasures ; give me, give me these now, or I am for ever, for ever undone ; I know not what to do, whither to go : God is against me, conscience against me, satan against me, fellow-sinners are against me, saints against me, creatures against me, the law and sin against me. Sirs, it will come

to this with you ; and when it is once come to this, there will be no escaping.

2. *Shall the books be opened?* Then it speaks to the saints and servants of God who have made it their business to remember to live for and be in a readiness against it, look for and comfort yourselves with the hope of this great opening day. Our Saviour speaking of the tokens of this day, Luke xxi. 28. says to his disciples, "Look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." q. d. It shall be a good day to you, you shall have no cause to be dismayed, but may meet it with comfort. It is observable, that this promise is the last promise in the book of God, the last message that Christ in heaven sends to his church on earth before his coming again ; "Surely I come quickly," Rev. xxii. 20. With which, as good news, he closes all up, and you have its welcome, "Amen ; even so come Lord Jesus." O sirs, the saints have looked for, have comforted themselves with the hopes of this day. *Luther* said, he had rather never have been born than not to be in expectation of this day. Q. it is a day to be expected, a day to be looked and longed for, and a day to be rejoiced in ! That you may be quickened to look and long for it, to encourage and comfort yourselves in it, consider,

(1.) That at this great opening your sins will be found blotted out. Those sins that you have gone mourning under here, that

you have been under disquieting fears about, that have cost you many tears and many waking hours, will all then appear blotted out, stand fully cancelled, never to be required, and what a sweet, welcome sight will this be!

(2.) At this great opening your names will be found written in the Lamb's book of life. Your names shall be found written in heaven, and you shall fully see that you are the objects of free, special, and distinguishing love, reaching from everlasting to everlasting; and will not this be a blessed sight?

(3.) At this opening, the face of God and Christ shall open on you, never to shut in or go under any cloud again for ever. Here the saints are absent from the Lord, and the Lord is absent from them in regard of the smiles of his face; but then they shall be for ever with him. 1 Thes. iv. 17.

(4.) At this opening, heaven shall open as an eternal mansion for you; Jesus will open at this day all his store-houses; the eternal kingdom, the eternal weight of glory, and the fulness of joy that is in the presence of God, shall then open. All the unseen things that are prepared for those that love God, shall then open.

(5.) At this day the righteousness and holiness of God's ways towards you will open before you, and you shall see a most clear and full commentary on that promise, "All things

shall work together for good to them that love God." Rom. viii. 28. All your tears, prayers, sufferings, patience, layings out for God from first to last, shall at this opening be found, owned, and crowned. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. iv. 18.



